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# Religious Experience

ITS EVIDENTIAL VALUE

BY  
GEORGE PRESTON MAINS



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**GEORGE PRESTON MAINS**

TO

***My Mother***

WHO BREATHED AROUND MY  
YOUNG LIFE THE ATMOSPHERE  
OF A GODLY NURTURE, AND  
WHO, TRANSLATED IN THE  
NINETY - FIFTH YEAR OF HER  
EARTHLY PILGRIMAGE, LEFT TO  
HER CHILDREN MOST PRECIOUS  
MEMORIES OF A SAINTLY LIFE,  
THIS VOLUME IS REVERENTLY  
AND AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.



# CONTENTS

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	PAGE
FOREWORD .....	9

## PART FIRST

### SOURCES

I. SOURCE AND SCOPE .....	21
II. THE SPIRITUAL SENSE .....	41
III. THE HOLY SPIRIT .....	63
IV. CONVERSION .....	83

## PART SECOND

### EVIDENTIAL VALUES

V. CHRISTIAN CHARACTER .....	105
VI. SPIRITUAL FRUITS .....	145
VII. CHRISTIAN SERVICE .....	167
VIII. THE PRAGMATIC TEST .....	191
IX. THE PRAGMATIC TEST (Continued)....	213
X. THE PRAGMATIC TEST (Concluded)....	231
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	255
INDEX .....	259





## FOREWORD

THIS book is written in the conviction that God has direct and vital relations with the human soul. These relations embrace all that is significant or of lasting value in human character and destiny. While the fundamental grounds of these relations are unchanging and abiding, man's knowledge ever grows. This means that his very opinions must constantly be held subject to revision and change. Dr. William Newton Clarke, in his great work on theology, has ably stated this mental law. He says:

Nor so long as Christianity is a living thing and not a relic can any statement of doctrine be final. Thought will always be busy with the great themes, and as long as men think they will see new light. Progress is a necessary form of the life of doctrine, each generation adding something to the work of the past, and offering something to the future. Christian doctrine is thus bound to be an ever-moving stream of intellectual and spiritual appreciation, and in its movement is its power. The steadfastness and the variability are both due to the fact that doctrine is the expression of a life that never fails.

“Religious Experience” is a subject which

has elicited ages-long discussion. I am impressed, however, that there is room for some fresh and modern restatements within this theme. I am quite aware that one writing upon this subject cannot hope to make successful appeal to all types of mind. There are minds, some quite diverse from others, whose doors are barred to any Christian reality whatsoever.

The philosophy of Nietzsche, for instance, seems, especially in Germany, to have much following. This philosophy is utterly godless. He rates Christianity as a great curse to the world. He brands it as an "intrinsic depravity." He would install in place of God the "Superman." It is the legitimate mission of the superman to crush and to destroy the weak, that the race may perpetuate only the strong. Without conscience and without sympathy, he would enthrone might as the only right.

I am impressed that the average quiet Christian mind, comfortably housed and soothed in its own faith, may have very inadequate conception of the subtle and corroding skepticism that is widely propagated in present-day thought. It is generally admitted that organized labor, representing a great army of citizenship, is, for the larger part, living in

practical divorce from the Church. An alien and powerful press, largely supported by the unchurched masses, is carrying everywhere the infection of vicious doubt and hate even toward Christianity itself. As Professor Thomas C. Hall has said:

There are weary and rebellious workingmen who are being taught day in and day out that there is no God, that the churches are fooling them, that the ministry is a selfish, money-making, cowardly class institution, and that the only way out is to overthrow all religion and to abandon all churches.

In any great city, at noonday or in the evening hours, there may be seen gathered at the street corners or at the park sides knots of men listening to harangues of outworn materialism and of a coarse and venomous infidelity. Unsalaries messengers, by night and by day, and under the open skies, and for every day in the week, are pressing upon the crowds the teachings of nescience and godlessness. All this is going on while the church doors are closed, and many of the members of the churches are indulging in undisturbed dreams of moral security.

In what may be ranked as circles of culture and of privilege, there is a large contingency of mind characterized by agnosticism, or by the fixed mood of worldly indifference toward

spiritual things. While a scientific materialism no longer occupies first-class rooms in the apartments of philosophic thought, nevertheless many are still giving to the lessons of nature a construction which excludes spiritual interpretation. Among gravely significant numbers of the recipients of high intellectual advantages is to be found a deadly indifference to either the spiritual opportunities and obligations of the present life, or to the demands and necessities of preparation for an eternal life to come. This condition, it is greatly to be feared, obtains in far larger measure than seems to be apprehended in the general thought of the Church.

While a materialistic philosophy is justly relegated to the past, it is still woefully true that the lure of a practical materialism rests appallingly upon the life of the age. The present passing world was never so attractive to the popular vision, never so bewitching and bewildering in its appeals to life, never offering such tempting service and reward to men, as now. The Mammon-god is widely worshiped in the age.

It is quite true that not all of these classes interest themselves to institute a formal or systematic opposition to Christianity itself, or to its teachings. They seem to have no awak-

ened interest in, or serious convictions concerning, the claims of the spiritual life. They do not oppose the Church; they simply give it the treatment of a cold and indifferent neglect. The great citizenship of the non-Christian world about us may be divided into two general classes: the one characterized by a spiritual indifference that seems as cold and hopeless as the grave; the other embracing all the camps of active opposition to Christianity, occupying advanced grounds, and using modern weapons and methods that were never outrivaled in the power of a subtle, obstinate, and deadly destructiveness.

In the meantime, while it would be fatuous to underestimate, much more so to ignore, the volume and strength of hostile forces, Christianity, in the values of its beneficent mission to the world, has nothing to fear in any comparison which may be instituted between itself and any or all other forces which would either destroy it, or substitute it by other faiths. Applying the pragmatic rule of Christ, "By their fruits, ye shall know them," to all systems alike, Christianity amply demonstrates its supreme fitness to receive, as above all its rivals, the universal approval and acceptance of mankind.

The genius of the Nietzschean philosophy

is to transform man into a destructive wild beast. The incarnation of this philosophy into Prussian militarism has been decisive in plunging Europe into a hell of flame and of indescribable horrors. It seems a fitting sequel to the life of the chief expounder and promoter of this philosophy that he should finally die in a madhouse.

So far as the great army of labor is concerned, there is no evidence that its acceptance of a materialistic guidance has demonstrated any power to promote among them the fruits either of sobriety, temperance, temporal prosperity, or the spirit of domestic or public peace. It is not to be forgotten that multitudes of the individuals involved are inheritors of Christian influences. They are by all their inheritances law and order-abiding men. They cannot be controlled either by the dictates or impulses of anarchy. Nevertheless, in times of crisis there occurs in their organizations what has never been known to take place under any Christianly governed bodies. In times of tension, however sporadic the instances may be, the labor organization has seemed powerless to prevent the resort by some, at least, of its members to violence, to the destruction of property, to dynamite, and to murder. However much good men may sympathize with the legitimate

rights and demands of labor—and these rights and demands are many—it seems impossible to show that the social and moral interests of the laboring world, as a whole, have been uplifted by the methods of godless organizations.

In the purely materialistic and plutocratic life of the present age there are to be encountered the same indifference, the same enmities toward Christianity with which Saint Paul had to contend anciently in his mission to the pagan world. And this modern world-spirit yields the same fruits to civilization as did that ancient paganism to the age of Paul.

Christianity in the meantime, whatever its faults or failures—and for the very reason that it seeks the moral transformation and uplift of an imperfect humanity, its human history is characterized by both faults and failures—nevertheless more conspicuously to-day than ever before holds before the world the one prophetic, quenchless, and adequate light for the moral guidance of humanity.

Historically measured, and in frankest admission of the moral imperfections of present world-society, Christianity stands without a rival in working both toward the eradication of moral evil and the creation of ideal human character in the world. Dr. Frank Ballard has so well covered this proposition, that I take

pleasure in giving the following statements direct from his own pen:

(1) Whatever be the comparative failure of Christianity, it has done, and is now doing, more toward the two great ends above contemplated, than any other religion.

(2) It has done, and is now doing, more than any form of irreligion.

(3) It has done, and is doing, when all the factors of the great problems are fairly taken into account, as much as could reasonably be expected.

(4) It is now doing more than any other influence in civilization, by way of contribution to the conquest of ill and the triumph of good.

A standing wonder, beauty, and fairness of Christianity is that it submits itself at all times and among all races to the plain test of human experience. It stands at all times ready to be judged by its fruits as shown in life and in character. It is to some exposition of these experimental tests that the present work is dedicated.

For thoughts and facts as set forth in the following pages I am indebted to many sources. Save in a few instances, I have avoided quotation marks, indicating direct quotations by the closer type. Nor have I burdened my space with footnotes of credits to special authors. At the close of the volume will be found a list of publications, each of which I have more or less consulted in the preparation of my manuscript.



My special acknowledgments are due to one work. I have reread with profit, and always with refreshing interest, William James's great work, *Varieties of Religious Experience*. I do not think I am so much indebted to James for new knowledge as for his fair-minded and masterful methods, his wealth of illustrative incidents, and the vigorous and lucid style employed in his treatment of a great subject.

The subject into which I have ventured, like a temple vast and many-roomed, is so spacious and rich as greatly to impress me that my work, taken at its best, is but a fraction of a great whole. If the readers of this book gain from its reading a tithe of the profit which I have experienced in its writing, then I shall be amply compensated for any labors expended in its preparation.

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.



**PART FIRST**  
**SOURCES**



# **I**

## **SOURCE AND SCOPE**

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.—*Genesis* 1. 27.

God that made the world and all things therein . . . hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, . . . that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.—*Acts* 17. 24-27.

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.—*Acts* 10. 34, 35.

Religion is so essential to man that he cannot escape from it. It besets him, penetrates, holds him even against his will. The proof of its necessity is the spontaneity of its existence. It comes into being without any man willing it, or any man making it; and as it began so it continues. Few men could give a reason for their belief, and the curious thing is that when it is attempted the reasons are, as a rule, less rational than the beliefs themselves. . . . If great historical religions which innumerable millions of men, as rational as we, have professed through thousands of ages, be resolved into systems of error and delusion that only the blind deceitfulness of the human heart could tempt man to believe, then it is evident that we dare not use the reason or the conscience which we have so discredited either to believe or to attest, or to justify the truth of our own. In other words, the philosophy that misreads the origin of religious ideas and the history of any religion will not, and, indeed, cannot, be just to the Christian; while he who would maintain the Christian must be just and even generous to all religions created and professed of men.—*Andrew Martin Fairbairn*.

Behind and at the foundation of all religion lies the fact of the soul's vision of the Eternal. The church, the historic faith, the communion of saints, the vital power and permanence of religion—all rest ultimately on the reality, and intensity, and clarity of that vision; on the things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, but which the Spirit reveals to the soul in the silence of the secret and inner shrine of the individual life. *There* is the central source and spring of religion, and there ultimately all its problems must find their solution.—*Benjamin A. Millard*.

## CHAPTER I

### SOURCE AND SCOPE

IN deciding a general title I have elected to use the term "Religious Experience" rather than "Christian Experience." This does not mean that I do not regard the ideal Christian experience as the highest type of religious experience. The religious experience of the race presents an infinite variety, much of which little lends itself to distinctive Christian classification. But no discussion of religious experience can be adequate which leaves out of consideration the religious life of non-Christian faiths. The literature of the religious life is well-nigh measureless. It opens itself out into realms of fact and suggestion so rich as to challenge largest study.

It is quite aside from my purpose to attempt any exhaustive survey of comparative religions. A vast volume of primitive phenomena in a work like this can be passed by without mention. But no open-minded review of religious thought and experience can fail to make impressive both the vastness of the religious

question itself and the commanding significance of many religious faiths which are not classified as Christian. Doubtless many religious views now in vogue and pleading for acceptance are destined to fail and to fall before the inquisition of reason. The horizon of religious thought, however, will ceaselessly expand. Religious truth which still awaits discovery and appropriation by sane and devout faith will be an ever-growing volume. There is no more obvious duty for the Christian thinker of to-day than to gird himself reverently, and with open and hospitable mind, for frankest exploration in realms of religious phenomena. From such study devoutly pursued there can result no detriment, much less a menace, to sane faith.

No one can intelligently deny, I think, that a great body of reverent thought addresses itself to the age, thought which so far has not familiarly uttered itself within the pale of so-called "historical orthodoxy," yet which at core is essentially Christian. It would be a large assumption indeed for any thinker to arrogate to himself a complete possession and mastery of essential Christian truth. The sum of Christian truth, if possible of apprehension, would doubtless be found coextensive with the facts of the moral universe. An inseparable feature of religion, however poor the contents of the



religion itself, is that the worshiper seeks address to a being whom he regards as greatly superior to himself. The higher the religious faith, the more exalted will be the being worshiped. A fact of increasing impressiveness the more it is explored, is that of a high and reverent Godward attitude which characterizes many of the heterogeneous religious faiths. The larger facts of these faiths, the facts really inspirational and vital, if separated from their nonessential associations, could be normally incorporated and domesticated in any reasonable system of Christian truth. It should be no cause for wonderment that there are many diverse expressions of religious faith. Even within the pale of credal Christianity there are many diverse views which separate the denominations from each other. And, unfortunately, the separating facts are usually the nonessential, the nonvital. If such is the situation within the recognized pale of the Christian Church, the diversities of nonconforming faiths should certainly furnish no occasion for surprise. But, in the larger measurements, the standing and falling articles of the great ethnic faiths will, at least very many of them, be found closely akin. The central facts of the great religions, when stripped of the burden which ignorance and superstition have imposed upon them,

will largely evince a common source. Back of all systems, and diversities of systems, man is universally religious because God is forever inspiring himself into the human soul.

Man is God's supreme counterpart in the universe. He was made in God's own likeness. God made man for himself. In a sense of divinest significance, he is God's own child. He is endowed with moral, intellectual, and affectional faculties, faculties capable of infinite expansion, that through an eternity he might grow into an ever-increasing knowledge of, into an ever-increasing likeness to, and an ever-enriching companionship with, God. More than to all the physical immensities does God's thought go out to the human soul. Man is the supreme object of God's love and nurture. He is still infantile. This is the way God started him. It is only with childish beginnings that man at his best is at present able to apprehend in any measure the wealth of his Father's love. But this being is in the making for a great future. God values him. God loves him. To promote his intellectual and moral education God has lifted up around him the staging of the material universe, and has thrown open the portals of endless and widening spiritual vistas. The forces of the moral universe are subsidized for man's glorification. The su-

preme and unending task, so far as this world is concerned, is so to inspire, to educate, to discipline, to develop man, that some time later in the æonian order he may come to superlative exaltation. It would thus be strangely anomalous indeed if God should not continuously stimulate and agitate the human soul with a touch of himself. It matters little that in his immaturity man has so little apprehended God's thought. The truth remains that God has kept himself in such unbroken touch with the human spirit that man has never been able to divest himself of the consciousness, however vague, of the divine nearness. The voice of the Spirit has never been altogether silent in the human breast. Man's religious nature, his divinest endowment, has never been permitted wholly to die within him. By virtue of this very nature, and of God's ceaseless moral touch upon his life, man is indeed "incurably religious."

We need not travel far into the fields of historic evidence to confirm the essential and universal religiousness of man. Let it be fully conceded that much of the religious expression of the race is both rudimentary, superstitious and unlovely. It still remains true that a great wealth of noble religious expression has uttered itself outside the pale of credal Chris-

tianity. It cannot be denied that this expression is often coupled with high intelligence and pure character. It is farthest possible from either my desire or purpose to extol any nonevangelical faith above the Christian discipleship of the New Testament, but it would be neither an intelligent, noble, nor candid attitude to ignore or to shun the outstanding values of much religious character whose credal beliefs do not match with the teachings of the evangelical standards. The truth is that a high order of religious life, both in and out of "orthodoxy," is characterized on the part of its representatives by great diversities both of belief and experience. The psychology of religious experience in diverse lives is as yet only partially explored. I am unable to resist the impression that many teachers who have acquired recognition as expositors of the faith have too often assigned narrow horizons to Christian truth. It is beyond question that the creeds of many of the denominations are such as to exclude from their fellowship many men of highest thought and purest lives. But is not this very condition one against which Christ distinctly warned his disciples? All the great religions have developed saintly characters. Even paganism, however exceptionally, has its saints. But do not all the saints really belong to God?

The united ecclesiastical rosters of the world would not be found to contain the names of all the saints.

If God by his Spirit is dealing with universal man, it ought to be unthinkable that no fruits, except in Christian lands, are being gathered from these divine processes. Such a conclusion would be in itself irrational. It would be a reflection against God. It is a conclusion worthy of an atheistic parentage. To say nothing about the great ethnic religions outside of Christendom, there are many in Christian communities, men of pure and noble character, who are unable to put themselves in intellectual sympathy with the historic creeds of Christianity. Yet what human authority is competent to decide that these men are not really citizens of the kingdom of Jesus Christ? I do not disparage the formulated creed. Most men need credal guidance. It serves as an anchor to hold them in hours of stress and storm. Comparatively few in the great masses do such thorough and competent thinking for themselves as to remove them from the necessity of the schoolmaster's guidance. The creeds have served immeasurable values, and are worthy of all historic honor. They are the wrought products of mighty minds, and they have furnished the battle cries of the armies of

righteousness in periods when the very powers of darkness have leagued themselves against the foundations of Christian truth. The formation of creeds is inevitable both from the nature and needs of faith. We no sooner have an experience than there arises the prompting to give some intellectual accounting of the experience itself. The religious life forms no exception to this law. This is the meaning of philosophy, the meaning of theology. The primitive Christian experience was so unique, so signal, so self-satisfying to its recipient, as to preclude all concern about its philosophy. It was simply thought of, and very rightly, as a direct incoming of God into the individual soul. Like the blind man whose sight was restored, he only knew and thought that whereas he was blind, he was now able to see. But historic Christianity had not gone far on its journey before it felt the necessity of a frank dealing with philosophy. This conviction accounts largely for the form of Saint John's Gospel.

We must wage battle neither against theology nor philosophy in themselves considered. Both are the indispensable handmaids of faith. The historic creeds were philosophical and theological necessities of the ages which gave them birth. What we need to remember is that the creeds are not infallible. They are human products.

They are not necessarily immortal. Rising and advancing Christian thought may outgrow and supersede them. One of the weaknesses of denominationalism has been an idolatry of creeds. Creed has been exalted above character. It has too often appeared that if a man were Puritanically orthodox in his intellectual creed, lapses in his moral character might easily be overlooked. Men have too easily assumed that if their intellectual beliefs could be religiously approved, they are safe within the fold. This is not the New Testament view. So far as intellectual belief is concerned, the very devils are orthodox. They believe, and tremble while they believe. It is this kind of orthodoxy which is receiving caustic and merciless arraignment in current literature. The accepted literary standards of the present are testing the values of Christian character, not by the correctness of a man's intellectual beliefs, but by the fruits of the Spirit as shown in life and conduct. And this is of momentous significance as a sign of clear spiritual vision and of moral demand which are voicing themselves in the thought of the age.

However great the function of the intellect as a conservator of sanity in thought, it is worth our while to take note of the fact that the most healthy present-day philosophy does not ac-

credit the intellect as being the chief fountain source of truth for life. Moral wholeness comes from inward spiritual health. This is something that lies deeper in the nature than intellect. This is a quality in character which the most brilliant intellectual processes can neither create nor secure. If one has this quality, he is in possession of something infinitely more valuable than the mere ability to pursue, however brilliantly, a line of intellectual logic, or to pronounce a shibboleth. Whoever has this quality carries within him essentially the spirit of reverence and of worship. His soul bends its knees humbly before the Most High. There is installed in such a breast the most effective norm of character. No man whose inner motives are shaped by high and worshipful thought can be other than in himself noble. He, whatever his incidental defect of creed, does not himself rest far this side of saintly character.

Emerson, as also Matthew Arnold, was a devout believer in moral law. He believed that the universe is finally dominated by moral purpose. There is a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness. He says:

The perception of this law awakens in the mind a sentiment which we call the religious sentiment, and which makes our highest happiness. Wonder-



ful in its power to charm and to command. It is a mountain air. It is the embalmer of the world. It makes the sky and the hills sublime, and the silent song of the stars is in it. It is the beatitude of man. It makes him illimitable. When he says "I ought"; when love warns him; when he chooses, warned from on high, the good and great deed; then, deep melodies wander through his soul from supreme wisdom. Then he can worship and be enlarged by his worship; for he can never go behind this sentiment. All the expressions of this sentiment are sacred and permanent in proportion to their purity. They affect us more than all other compositions. The sentences of the olden time, which ejaculate this piety, are still fresh and fragrant. And the unique impression of Jesus upon mankind, whose name is not so much written as plowed into the history of this world, is proof of the subtle virtue of this infusion.

Emerson, though honest to the core in his intellectual convictions, was doubtless something of a pagan in his creed. But in moral character, as measured by his life and conduct, he could pass in the social exchanges as a saint. It was of him that his genial friend, Father Taylor, chaplain of the Seaman's Bethel in Boston, said: "Emerson may finally go to hell, but if so, one thing is sure: the atmosphere of the place will change, and population will set that way."

Abraham Lincoln is a character revered throughout civilization. In nobility of ideals, in Christlike love of men, in sacrificial service,

in poise of character, in clarity and loftiness of conviction, in purity of life, few, if any, have excelled him. If he had been, as added to his known qualities and deeds, a conspicuous church worker, his name unquestionably would be written high in the calendar of elect Christian lives. But was he really less a saint because his name was not written on some church register? It is doubtless highly important for most Christians to be formally enrolled in church membership. If for no other reason, most persons, if they would secure for themselves a needed Christian nurture, require the intimate spiritual instructions and fellowships which the Church alone best furnishes. Emphasizing all this, it must still be rationally admitted, I think, that formal enrollment in church membership is not a standing or falling condition of vital membership in the kingdom of Christ.

Lincoln had some intellectual difficulties which made impossible his easy acceptance at all points of a credal orthodoxy. But in essential quality, his life, in gigantic stature, and in the whitest light of publicity, stands in history as beautifully Christian.

To Mr. Henry B. Rankin, intimate friend of Mr. Lincoln in earlier years, we are indebted for an invaluable record as falling

directly from Mr. Lincoln's own lips. In a political campaign in which Peter Cartwright was a rival candidate against him for Congress, Lincoln had been charged with being an infidel. To this charge he made no reply in his campaign speeches. But to Mr. Rankin's mother, Lincoln's personal friend, he made a private statement of his personal faith, conditioning that the statement itself should be in no way used in the campaign. He said:

I will not discuss the character and religion of Jesus Christ on the stump! That is no place for it. At the time you refer to I was having serious questionings about some portions of my former implicit faith in the Bible. The influences that drew me into such doubts were strong ones—men having the widest culture and strongest minds of any I had known up to that time. In the midst of those shadows and questionings, before I could see my way clear to decide on them, there came into my life sad events and a loss that you were close to, and you knew a great deal about how hard they were for me, for you were, at that time, a mutual friend. Those days of trouble found me tossed amidst a sea of questionings. They piled big upon me, experiences that brought with them great strains upon my emotional and mental life. Through all I groped my way until I found a stronger and higher grasp of thought, one that reached beyond this life with a clearness and satisfaction I had never known before. The Scriptures unfolded before me with a deeper and more logical appeal, through these new experiences, than anything else

I could find to turn to, or ever before had found in them.

I do not claim that all my doubts were removed then, or since that time have been swept away. They are not. Probably it is to be my lot to go on in a twilight, feeling and reasoning my way through life, as questioning, doubting Thomas did. But in my poor, maimed, w'thered way, I bear with me as I go on a seeking spirit of desire for a faith that was with him of the olden time, who, in his need, as I in mine, exclaimed, "Help thou my unbelief."

I doubt the possibility or propriety of settling the religion of Jesus Christ in the models of man-made creeds and dogmas. It was a spirit in the life that he laid stress on and taught, if I read aright. I know I see it to be so with me.

The fundamental truths reported in the four Gospels as from the lips of Jesus Christ, and that I first heard from the lips of my mother, are settled and fixed moral precepts with me. I have concluded to dismiss from my mind the debatable wrangles that once perplexed me with distractions that stirred up, but never absolutely settled anything. I have tossed aside with the doubtful differences which divide denominations—sweeping them all out of my mind among the nonessentials. I have ceased to follow such discussions or be interested in them.

I cannot without mental reservations assent to long and complicated creeds and catechisms. If the church should ask simply for assent to the Saviour's statement of the substance of the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself"—that church would I gladly unite with.

There are many known instances of individuals who have been swayed and molded by high religious convictions and motives, convictions and motives essentially Christian, who nevertheless have not been able to place themselves in convincing sympathy with the credal conditions of church membership. The difficulty may have gone even to the inability of accepting the credal interpretations of Christ's character and mission, yet with their hearts, the instruments through which men believe unto righteousness, these same men passionately embrace Christ's spirit and motive.

Instances need not be multiplied. I have cited the foregoing cases in illustration of the very truth which Christ himself announced, namely, that the Kingdom over which he presides is something far larger and may be something far different than the entire sum of ecclesiastical organizations. The citizenship of this Kingdom is made up of all who are in vital moral harmony with Christ, and in the final enrollment these in great numbers shall come up from the north and the south, from the east and from the west.

Whatever discriminating safeguards should be put around these facts in Christian teaching, the facts themselves are entitled to a rational and sympathetic hospitality. While, upon the

one hand, it is clearly the duty of evangelical thought to sedulously guard itself against error, it is, on the other hand, not less its sacred obligation to be on guard against putting too narrow constructions upon the world-mission of the Holy Spirit in dealing with the hearts and lives of men.

However preeminently true it is, and such I fully believe to be the fact, that the Holy Scriptures contain the highest and completest record of God's revelation of himself to elect souls, it still remains true that the seat of revelation for all ages and races is alone in the human breast. In its distinctive quality, to say nothing of the special inspiration of prophet and apostle, the book that contains the photographic record of the life, character and teachings of Jesus Christ must and will remain, however challenged, the supreme utterance for the highest religion. Yet, in our habitual use of the Bible, it is easy for us to overlook the fact that in its every utterance, both in the Old and in the New Testaments, we realize final validity only as they make appeal to, and find approval from, the moral and spiritual senses resident within us. The moral and spiritual constitution of man is fundamental and remains the same from age to age. However distinctive the message, or

the purpose for which it is given, it remains true that God reveals himself to men to-day on the same grounds and by the same processes as in any past age. To the soul that is seer-like, consecrated and worshipful, there comes as certainly now the heavenly vision as to Moses or to Paul. Really, the divine revealing ought now to be more richly, more perfectly apprehended by saintly thought than ever before. For many centuries the devout mind of the Church has been perpetually feeding itself upon the spiritual revelations of both the Old and the New Testaments. The teaching of the records has received continuously fresh and enlarging interpretation from the experience and knowledge of the Christian generations. The Church, to whom the Holy Spirit is ever showing the things of Christ, is now in possession of a fuller and richer revelation of Christ's character and mission than was ever before apprehended in human thought. And this growth in spiritual knowledge will ever continue through indefinite time to come. For Christianity the Bible contains the major premise which must forever remain normative and regulative for the spiritual life. But the inclusions posited in this premise are far larger, more various and pregnant in meaning, than have ever yet been

apprehended either by exploring mind or in saintly experience.

The Church of final conquest will make all its advances under the inspiration of new vision and an ever-enlarging apprehension of Christian truth. This Church will require in its human leadership the inspired seer, the soul with the mystic spiritual vision, the saint who experimentally knows both the rapture of transfiguration heights and the stress of service in the shadowed valleys where demons are vexing the lives of men.



## **II**

# **THE SPIRITUAL SENSE**

God is not dumb that he should speak no more;  
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness  
And findest not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor.

—*J. R. Lowell.*

Without thyself, O man, thou hast no means to look for, by which thou mayest know God. Thou must abide within thyself; to the light that is in thee thou must turn thee; there thou wilt find it and nowhere else. God is nearest unto thee and to every man. He that goes forth of himself to any creature, thereby to know God, departs from God. God is nearer unto every man than himself, because he penetrates the most inward and intimate parts of man and is the Life of the inmost spirit. Mind, therefore, the Light that is in thee.—*Peter Balling.*

When we call man a being of spiritual endowments, we mean that he is possessor of the powers out of which morality and religion have been brought forth, and is open to all the possibilities that rationality, morality, and religion imply. By possession of his rational nature he has moral responsibility and religious powers, and is capable of rising to life above sensuous and temporal things, in the fellowship of the eternal.—*Doctor William Newton Clarke.*

There remains the greatest of all man's higher senses, his sense of the spiritual. We cannot, in one way, speak of that as a new sense. One would call it the oldest in existence. Assuredly what it stands for is the oldest thing in the universe. And yet, as related to human life as a whole, it may still be regarded as the youngest of the faculties. Man's animal nature is old almost as the world. It derives from all the million years of our planet's animal story. Compared with this, his spiritual quality is indeed a late arrival. It is as yet a mere streak on the top of his nature, a babe new-born amid the ferocious tribe of his animalities. But the babe has all the future before it. That streak of dawn means a long and splendid day to come. . . . The religious feeling, that baffling mystery to the psychologist; with its mystic exaltations, with its attendant phenomena of dreams, of vision, of psychic forces; with its stupendous moral driving power, with its possibilities of all that is exquisite in feeling; with its hints of unimaginable acquisitions yet to be realized; the religious feeling, we say, is of all the senses of man's inner nature the one that carries in it the richest promise.—*J. Brierley.*

## CHAPTER II

### THE SPIRITUAL SENSE

UPON the threshold of this chapter I tarry briefly to take note of a faculty which may be named the "psychic sense." Psychic research, especially in recent years, has engaged much critical study. It must be admitted, I think, that, after all deductions are made for mistakes of method, or for fraudulent processes, this study has yielded a mass of phenomena worthy of the most scientific investigation. I do not propose here to enter, pro or con, into the merits of this subject. The reality, however, of a vision of things, ordinarily unseen by men, is so well attested from sources both numerous and commanding as to make skepticism of the phenomena unreasonable. As competent witnesses to the reality of such phenomena, we might cite the names of James Russell Lowell, William Stead, and Sir Oliver Lodge. These are a few from great numbers, who give direct, and seemingly reliable, testimony of experiences with "presences" which belong to the realm of mystery. There is also a large literature relating to experiences designated under the general name of "trance"

—a state in which the soul seems to have passed out of the body or to be rapt in vision. In the book of Acts it is said of Saint Peter that once “he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened.” Was this experience akin to that of Saint Paul, who in a vision was caught up to the third heaven, himself not knowing whether he was in or out of the body? For the trance experience a multitude of witnesses could be named, among whom are Charles Kingsley, Alfred Tennyson, and J. A. Symonds.

There is also a strange borderland of impressions which is frequently entered under conditions of anæsthesia. In this state voluntary movements are suspended, and the vital functions reduced to the lowest action. In passing into this state the mystical consciousness is stimulated in an extraordinary degree. “Depth beyond depth of truth seems revealed” to the subject. William James, a foremost student in this field of phenomena, writes:

Some years ago I myself made some observations on this aspect of nitrous oxide intoxication, and reported them in print. One conclusion was forced upon my mind at that time, and my impression of its truth has ever since remained unshaken. It is that our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different. We may go

through life without suspecting their existence; but apply the requisite stimulus, and at a touch they are there in all their completeness, definite types of mentality which probably somewhere have their field of application and adaptation. No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded.

I am induced to mention these various phenomena because they seem to indicate a multiform susceptibility, potentiality, of the soul for psychical experiences from which the ordinary, perhaps the normal, life of men seems excluded. These susceptibilities, however they may be finally classified, or validated, would seem to indicate that the human soul, if it could only make connections, might become a free citizen and explorer of perhaps innumerable realms which now lie mostly beyond the range of observation. They suggest at least that the soul is a marvelous entity, a something of illimitable possibilities, a something which may very well be akin to divinity.

For the purposes of this writing I do not at all identify what I have termed the "psychic sense," whatever it may be, with the "spiritual sense." The latter is a racial possession, a something certain of manifestation in all high religious experience.

Unfortunately, it has not been, until very

recently, common to philosophy to accord much place or validity to the religious sense. This sense has been much treated as though it were the offspring of outgrown superstitions. By some schools of philosophy it has been contemptuously dismissed as though it were the creation of a priestcraft, a kind of vocation invented for the purpose of furnishing a livelihood for a school of men skilled in juggling with human hopes and fears. The serious advocates of such thought have simply, if at all, put themselves into history as purblind observers of the universe. Their thought-product is in no worthy sense to be even mentioned as philosophy.

The phenomena of religion have increasingly forced recognition for themselves. No philosophy worthy of the name is now indifferent to their claims. Our modern libraries abound in works devoted to the psychology of religion. William James, Borden P. Bowne, Edwin D. Starbuck, George A. Coe, Edward P. Ames, William E. Hocking—all American writers—are a few among many who have furnished illuminating studies in this vital field.

The modern psychologists, quite generally, enter their protests against the method of the old philosophy which mapped out the human mind into "Intellect, Sensibilities, and Will,"

each a water-tight compartment susceptible of being independently examined by itself. The normal mental life, however various and complex its functioning powers, is one. Man exercises the same faculties in his religious thought and activities as in his vocational pursuits. His religiousness means that he gives a special direction, emphasis, and application to religion of the same mental totality which he gives to other objects which may engross his energies. The quality of the object pursued is the decisive thing. If one's mentality is absorbed in selfish greeds or in low ambitions, his very character itself will take on the qualities which he pursues. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Fortunately, the qualities of motives are so well understood that none need mistake as to the effect of an engrossing affection on character.

So far as the spiritual sense is concerned, it would seem to matter little what philosophy may decide as to its genesis. All agree that this sense is potential in universal human nature. It is equally agreed that of all motives which transform and uplift character none is so morally dynamic as the motives of a high religious faith. A psychology which could trace the genesis and evolution of the spiritual sense would not thereby detract in the slight-

est from its moral significance for human life. The spiritual sense is to be philosophically reckoned with. It is primal in human nature. The magnetic needle points not more certainly to the pole than does this sense to a divine source. Without its activity man can have knowledge neither of God nor of a spiritual universe. Sadly, the vision of this sense may be greatly obscured. Its accompanying conception of the character of God may be very unworthy. But if the soul is to have any inspiration, any revelation, in spiritual things, these can come to consciousness only at the seat of the spiritual sense. The spiritual sense, as, indeed, the faculty of conscience, is subject to education. It is the function of Christian teaching, from whatever source, to carry light and truth to the spiritual understanding. "The entrance of thy words giveth light." "If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." But the spiritual sense is the eye of the soul. It is the cleansed vision of this sense that enables the pure in heart to see God.

Science asserts that the laws of nature are absolutely reliable. Eucken has repeatedly stated that if reason does not reside in the whole structure of the universe, it cannot be found in any single spot. The order of the



world about us is not a lie. We live in a system where aptitudes are met by correspondences. If for the eye there is light, if for the reason truth, then man is simply mocked if for the spiritual sense there is no responding God. It would be egregiously absurd to declare that we live in a system which makes infallible response to our physical senses, to our appetites, to our reason, and yet totally refuses response to our conscious moral and spiritual needs. This would be a proclamation of incapacity against the universe. It would be to destroy by one stroke the foundations of both philosophy and science. If we live in an honest universe, we may implicitly rely upon an ample correspondence to man's highest and most imperative needs—the needs of his spiritual nature. The moral law, which was to the great philosopher Kant a standing wonder, is not a cheat. Man's moral constitution is not a lie. The only answer to the infinite in man, to the irrepressible and undying hunger of his soul is—God.

The subject considered is one of great gravity. It should be approached in a spirit of the utmost open-mindedness, candor, and reverence. It is due to say that recent psychology has effected marked revisions in the traditional views of both inspiration and revelation. The

prevalent, or popular, view of these subjects has been that God's touch upon man's spiritual life is by some outward, miraculous, or phenomenal manifestation, rather than by a process purely of inward illumination. I do not forget the outward historic processes by which God has furnished object-lessons of himself and of his purposes, that thereby men might be schooled in the methods of Providence. Of this method of divine education I shall speak elsewhere.

The fact now to be emphasized is that God's spiritual revelations of himself, the inspirations through which the clearest vision of himself is secured, are those which have their seat and operation solely within the human breast. As the ear can have no hearing save by the entrance of sound, the eye no vision save by the entrance of light, so the spiritual sense can have no perception of God save as it is itself touched by divine illumination. This is only to say that the spiritual organ in man is inoperative, without function, save as evoked in response to spiritual stimuli. But, if the spiritual sense is the organ through which God finds entrance into, and expression of himself within, the soul, it is clear that the soul itself is a sacred temple into which God enters, that he may give inspirations and revelations from himself.

The fact of divine processes in history, the fact of the inspired records in the Sacred Scriptures, the supreme fact itself of Jesus Christ as portrayed in the New Testament—these apparently outward facts in no way invalidate the human soul as the one seat of divine inspiration. The record of revelation, voicing itself either in history or in the Scriptures, can secure no appeal, receive no response, until it finally utters itself in the inner courts of the soul. It was a saying of George Fox that “Though I read of Christ and God, I know them only from a like spirit in my own soul.” Not even God can make a single spiritual revelation of himself save as within man there is an awakened and illuminated spiritual response. The man with a dormant spiritual sense is one who would stand mute, dumb, and unseeing in the face of a flaming Sinai or a pleading Calvary of divine manifestation.

It hardly needs restatement that the spiritual sense is God’s one door of approach to the universal heart. The scientific unity of the world nowhere more certainly holds than in the universally homogeneous character of man’s moral and spiritual constitution. God deals spiritually with all men. A measure of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

It does not follow that all peoples, certainly not at the same periods of history, should be possessed of equally clear spiritual insight. Even members of the same family, reared in a common environment, often show great dissimilarity in acuteness of perception. This does not prove that fundamentally they have dissimilar constitutions or faculties. So, however much nations and races may differ in grasp upon certain conceptions, this is no proof of fundamental dissimilarity in the physical, mental, and moral constitution of the race as a whole. As to alertness of spiritual apprehension, much may depend upon both racial heredity and environment. Renan, in an eloquent passage, extols the spiritual genius of the ancient Hebrews. In his philosophy he seeks to account for this genius on the ground of national habit and environment. The great seers of ancient Israel, living in the white sunlight and under the starry skies of Syria, whatever the deeper causes, proved themselves exceptionally responsive to the Divine Presence. They, as no other ancient characters, evidenced both susceptibility and hospitality to the loftiest moral inspirations.

We must hesitate, however, to conclude that Israel was the only ancient people with whom God was distinctively dealing. If God exer-

cises any providence over the world, we do well to inquire as to the scope of the providential purpose. All of God's dealings in history look toward the finality of a perfected humanity. The kingdom of God in the earth, both in the making and its completed form, will involve many other factors than those which we are accustomed to classify as distinctively spiritual. God's perfected world will be characterized by law, art, intellectual enlightenment, universal education, social and industrial justice, human brotherhood, and by all conditions which must contribute to the weal and purity of society. A final and perfect civilization was from the beginning in God's diagram. For the fulfillment of this program, God seems to have assigned a division of labor among the nations. Let the Hebrew seer remain unchallenged as the supreme moral teacher of his times. It will still remain true that he was very far from contributing all the elements requisite to God's ideal of civilization. Indeed, in many of the highest things the Hebrew was a laggard. In philosophy and art he holds no rank with his Grecian contemporaries. In the art of government and in the creation of civil codes he is utterly overshadowed by the Roman. The Jews have been scattered throughout civilization, yet their con-

tribution to world-statesmanship among the nations has been well-nigh a negligible quantity. They have a superficial reputation of being great financiers, but the fact is that a dozen American financiers could be named who have amassed sufficient wealth to buy out the entire Jewish world. In music, while the Hebrew has given to the worshiping world a first song litany, yet in the production of great oratorios and symphonies, the classical masterpieces of music, the Hebrew is nowhere to be mentioned in comparison with the great Italian, German, and even English, composers. In inventive arts, the arts that have multiplied human productivity a thousand fold, the Jew figures very little.

Yet, we must not be guilty of the impertinence or the pedantry of minifying the place of the Hebrew in the great complex of civilization. On his brow we may reverently and justly place the crown of moral leadership for mankind. Even though small among the tribes of earth, he has made contributions to the world's spiritual uplifting greater than the mightiest. He holds, and will forever hold, unrivaled and secure place as the prophet and proclaimer of the highest inspirations and hopes for humanity. The writings which were born in his inspired soul will remain to the end,

and superlatively, matchless religious classics for mankind. The contributions to civilization of great moral personalities as made by the Hebrew race stand unapproachable by the representatives of all other peoples. The Hebrews gave to the world Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, John the Baptist, Jesus, and Paul. If the Hebrew race were now to become extinct, mankind, with the brightest forecasts which we may make for its future, will never reach a point of development at which it will not be compelled to look back to Hebrew history for its finest moral ideals, and for its matchless spiritual teachers.

The Hebrew compels the moral historian to stand among the Judæan hills, and thence to cast his measuring lines for the spiritual significance of history. The Hebrew stands in the moral center of the divine drama of the world. Nevertheless, we must not discredit our own judgment, nor needlessly impoverish our own vision, by assuming that he alone has been the object or the instrument of God's providential dealings with the world. All the races and sons of men are in God's providential vision. In seeking any assessment of the divine dealings with the human race we must put ourselves on guard against any attempt to confine the entire meaning of

providence in some pocket of a narrow creed. In reaching, even proximately, an adequate point for measuring the scope of God's grace, we must, if needs be, familiarize ourselves with the conception that God is, and always has been, working for a world-humanity. The spiritual sense, common to the race, is the universal ground of appeal both for God and his messengers. The message of the preacher is effective only as he awakens this responsive sense. This same spiritual sense, universal in the heathen world, is the one door of entrance and of hope for all missionary effort. The Holy Spirit himself waits with his illuminating presence at this very door for admission to every human life.

Historically, we know only too sadly how crude, how beclouded, how seemingly hopeless has been the response of the great masses of mankind to God's higher thought and purpose. Like a luminous mountain, with ever-enriching revelations as it is ascended, God's redemptive purpose has been set up in the midst of men. And yet how few, even of saintly minds, have climbed to the most inspiring heights! But God is neither discouraged nor balked in his purposes. The infantile moral helplessness and ignorance of the race is no surprise to him. It is in the presence of



such beginnings that he ordains all the prophetic processes which are to ultimate in the final splendors and triumphs of his kingdom among men. It is needless to advocate any special theory of evolution. The perfected theory of evolution has not yet been written. But we must not quarrel with history. A sure lesson of history is that God is dealing intellectually and morally with the race by evolutionary processes. This is asserted by all the records of human advancement. All knowledge is gained by the exercise of faculties which initially are undeveloped and unknowing. But how slow has been the march of knowledge! For immemorial ages the earth has remained an unexplored storehouse of laws and materials dynamic for human uses. Such arts, sciences, philosophies, and inventions as have thus far come into service have been secured only at the price of infinite and buffeting toils of mind. The fact, however, of most astounding significance is that the light of knowledge so far gained only serves to indicate infinities of fact yet to be explored.

Now, if such is God's method in dealing with man's intellectual and inventive attainments, as relating to his material and temporal life on the earth, why should we look for a prompter process in the attainment of that knowledge

and experience which pertain to the higher spiritual life? It is an obvious historical fact that the progress of the race in spiritual knowledge and character has at best lingered on slow, difficult, and toilsome pathways. Even now, in large areas, as measured by human impression, the promise of man's spiritual transformation and final exaltation seems little better than a hopeless dream. It would indeed be such if we had to reckon without God. But he from behind what is to us "the dim unknown" is "keeping watch above his own." He is infallibly engineering the world to what may be the far-off but sure event of his perfected kingdom. It cannot be that the great prophets and poet-seers of the ages are mistaken in their vision. Browning, without illusion, saw the dark and forbidding things of life. He had faced the specter of doubt. But never once was his faith eclipsed, nor his courage daunted. He felt sublimely confident of his own future. He said:

If I stoop  
Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,  
It is but for a time; I press God's lamp  
Close to my breast; its splendor, soon or late,  
Will pierce the gloom! I shall emerge one day.

It was Browning who put his own prophecy

of man's perfected future into the lips of a medieval mystic:

For these things tend still upward, progress is  
The law of life, man is not man as yet.  
Nor shall I deem his object served, his end  
Attained, his genuine strength put fairly forth,  
While only here and there a star dispels  
The darkness, here and there a towering mind  
O'erlooks its prostrate fellows; when the host  
Is out at once to the despair of night,  
When all mankind alike is perfected,  
Equal in full-blown powers—then, not till then,  
I say, begins man's general infancy.  
. . . So in man's self arise  
August anticipations, symbols, types  
Of a dim splendor ever on before  
In that eternal circle life pursues.  
For men begin to pass their nature's bound,  
And find new hopes and cares which fast supplant  
Their proper joys and griefs; they grow too great  
For narrow creeds of right and wrong, which fade  
Before the unmeasured thirst for good; while peace  
Rises within them ever more and more.  
Such men are even now upon the earth,  
Serene amid the half-formed creatures round  
Who should be saved by them and joined with them.

The great laureate voices his faith, a most optimistic and prophetic faith, in man's perfected future in many a glowing verse. He had the vision at least of God's infinite patience, of his unthwartable purpose to bring man, even though it should require æonian ages, to final perfection.

Dawn not Day!

Is it shame, so few should have climbed from the  
dens in the level below,

Men, with a heart and a soul, no slaves of a  
four-footed will?

But if twenty million of summers are stored in  
the sunlight still,

We are far from the noon of man, there is time  
for the race to grow.

Red of the dawn!

Is it turning a fainter red? so be it, but when shall  
we lay

The Ghost of the Brute that is walking and  
haunting us yet, and be free?

In a hundred, a thousand winters? Ah, what  
will *our* children be,

The men of a hundred thousand, a million sum-  
mers away?

Again:

Where is one that, born of woman, altogether can  
escape

From the lower world within him, moods of tiger,  
or of ape?

Man as yet is being made, and ere the crowning  
Age of ages,

Shall not æon after æon pass and touch him into  
shape?

All about him shadow still, but, while the races  
flower and fade,

Prophet-eyes may catch a glory slowly gaining on  
the shade,

Till the peoples all are one, and all their voices  
blend in choric

Hallelujah to the Maker: "It is finished. Man is  
made."

The question will be raised, "What can be the relation of such a philosophy to the incarnation?" If Christ was the eternal Logos incarnate, if the Christ of Syria was really God manifest in the flesh, then for his working and effective ministry in the world there is no need to set historic limits. Himself said, "Before Abraham was, I am." Christ's mission with human destiny is eternally operative. He alone, as the Lamb slain from before the foundations of the world, always has been and always will be the Divine Redeemer of men. Christ has been present in the world with all races and in all ages to meet the spiritual needs of men. This doctrine was taught by Origen, Augustine, and Luther, and by innumerable others. Canon James Maurice Wilson has stated it as follows: "Christ's redeeming work did not begin when he was born in Bethlehem: it had begun as the Word of conscience, the Word 'very nigh' to man, in all ages. That which is universal in man was manifested, concentrated, in the historic revelation of Christ. In him the universal subjective became the unique objective revelation. But in all time he was the Light which lighteth every man." In a sense divinely true, though not nominally historic, Christ has always been, and always will be, a redeeming and saving Presence in the world.

The greatness of Jesus Christ passes by infinite measurements human comprehension. Saint Paul was sanely right when he declared that "by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him." Christ's mission is both cosmic and æonian. He is working the worlds and the ages to a divine program. The exaltation of man is eternally central to his purpose. He will neither weary nor suffer defeat. Eternity is his theater, and the inexhaustible resources of the moral universe are at his command. It matters not that sin, ignorance, superstition, and all the brood of moral ills which these beget, entrench themselves against him. Against sin he will oppose God's holiness; against ignorance, divine enlightenment; against superstition, scientific knowledge; against all moral ills, the salvation of God. Unflinching he will widen his conquest until all knees of things in heaven and of things in earth shall bow to his sovereignty, and he shall be universally acclaimed as King of kings and Lord of lords.

### **III**

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Spirit, who makest all things new,  
Thou leadest onward: we pursue  
The heavenly march sublime.  
'Neath thy renewing fire we glow,  
And still from strength to strength we go,  
From height to height we climb.

To thee we rise, in thee we rest;  
We stay at home, we go in quest,  
Still thou art our abode.  
The rapture swells, the wonder grows,  
As full on us new life still flows  
From our unchanging God.

The whole of human nature must be included in its various relations to that Divine Being who is not mere Intelligence, mere Power, mere Beneficence, but the Highest Life of all, the only real and complete Personality in the universe. He possesses a personal life in its unimaginable perfection and has intrusted his high gift in a measure to some of his creatures, that they may continually press forward toward its fuller realization. The Divine Spirit is at the same time God *over* all human spirits, *around* them and *within* them—each word to be maintained with equal weight and strenuousness. To apprehend, maintain, enjoy, and extend that many-sided relation constitutes the true life of the finite spirit through all its history.—*Dr. W. T. Davison.*

We are discovering now that God is not only the source and object of the religious feelings, but that he also is a musician, an artist, a mathematician, the Creator and giver of all beauty, and that in seeking perfection in these directions we are seeking him. It is a false conscience which would shut up our religious interests to the narrow ground of a few elementary ideas. This is to put them in charge of a kitchen garden when their true role is to govern a universe.—*J. Brierley.*



## CHAPTER III

### THE HOLY SPIRIT

“CHRISTIANITY is a religion of the spirit; that is to say, it finds its new world in a super-sensible, invisible kingdom. It believes in a purely spiritual God as the Source and Sustainer of all reality, so that the renewal of life which it demands is preeminently spiritual in kind. Nature, as the creation of God, revealing his splendor through all her works and ways, and praising him with a thousand tongues, has to subserve the aims of spirit.”

This statement, by one who is perhaps the world's greatest living philosopher, must be accepted, so far as it goes, as truly representing the Christian view. The Holy Spirit, in Christian thought, is God, God everywhere working in his world. The ideal Christian life is the largest, divinest, and most perfect life possible to man. But of this life the Holy Spirit is the Begetter, the Sustainer, the Inspiration and the Guide. The Christian bears the name of Christ; he is Christ's disciple, a citizen of Christ's kingdom. He is ruled by Christ's

spirit. His chief aim is to be Christlike and to do Christ's will. The mission of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit are one. The mission of the Holy Spirit is, in all divine resourcefulness, to serve the kingdom of Christ. In general uses the names of Christ and of the Holy Spirit are interchangeable terms. Dismissing all technic of theological definition, the Holy Spirit is the ever-living, immanent, and omniscient Christ, the Christ who controls all moral forces in the interests of his kingdom.

Always, in treating of divine character, we need to guard ourselves against narrow conceptions. Common Christian thought ascribes to the Spirit the offices of Convincer of sin, Pardoner of the penitent, Regenerator and Sanctifier of the believer, Bestower of grace, Inspirer, Sustainer, and Comforter of the Christian in burden-bearing service and in all of life's turbulent experiences, and, at the last, a Divine Presence dissipating for him the shadows of death with the radiance of immortal hope. This diagram, if it were all, would be worthy of God. It is a diagram which only a Supreme Divinity could fill. But all this, with its unmeasured import, represents but a fraction, however great, of the Spirit's mission to the world's life.

The mission of the Holy Spirit relates itself

creatively and vitally to man's entire being. The thought of the historic Church, to an overshadowing degree, has been occupied with the relations of the individual soul to God. The Church has laid not too much, but too exclusive, emphasis upon the value of salvation for the individual. Salvation for the individual from the "wrath to come" has been hitherto largely central in the teaching and efforts of the Church. This particular emphasis should never be withheld. But it has never been a chief teaching of New Testament Christianity that its exclusive mission is to save the individual soul.

Man is made preeminently for two relationships: the one with God, his Maker; the other with man, his fellow. The Holy Spirit has a vital relation to every part which man sustains in these imperative connections. Man is God's counterpart, endowed with the potentialities of intellect, of insight, of affection, of will, of conscience. He is made a worshipful being, potentially capable of unlimited moral and spiritual apprehension. Upon him there is laid absolute divine demand for response from his every faculty. His relations are both individual and social. His highest life must realize itself in both self-development and service. The Holy Spirit sweeps the entire scale of the human

soul. Man is like a musical instrument, with infinite possibilities of expression; but perfection of expression is realized only when in all his faculties he responds to the Master's touch. In the measure only of this response can a man come perfectly into the experience of the Christian life.

What shall we say about the intellect as related to the Christian life? God is the great Thinker. Among the marvels of creation is the intellectual endowment of man. He has capacity for thinking his way into the measurements of God's own thought. The very endowment of the intellectual faculty is full proof that God himself is both honored and served by the normal uses of the human mind. In stressing man's duty to love God with all his heart it seems sometimes to be overlooked that God requires absolute consecration of "Mind and Soul," as well as of heart. Many most vital questions can secure final decision only in the court of intellect. Intellect is the inquisitor and discoverer in fields of scientific and philosophical truth. Man himself, however infinite in faculty, however baffling the unexplored mysteries which still may remain within him, comes to his best self-understanding only in the light of those microscopic and mental processes by which he ever seeks self-

explanation. Let it be admitted that intellect does not yield all the criteria of truth, and that there are many mysteries which philosophy fails to explain; yet, eliminate the intellectual faculties, and human life, so far as we can see, would be reduced to a meaningless medley.

Man, as artist or critic, is made to reflect the divine mind. It is a teaching of the Hebrew Scriptures that God inspires the artificer for cunning workmanship. Is it unreasonable to assume that the Divine Spirit unveils the beauties of nature to the vision of the artist, that he touches the soul of the composer to finest harmonies, or that he inspires the imagination of the poet for creative work? Who shall tell us that these values are born without a divine parentage! The artist truly responds to the Spirit's call when he consecrates his talent to noble uses.

God made the mind for critical investigation. In the exercise of this function it has gathered and stored for human uses, culture, and power, all the world's wealth of knowledge, science, art, history, philosophy. God has isolated no department of his own work from the search of man the thinker and critic. It would seem by some to be judged a presumption and sin that man should assume critically to investigate claims long associated with religious thought—

claims which may be held as of sacred purport. Not a few seem to think that the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures are of a character so sacred as to make it a presumption and sin that any attempt should be made to subject them to critical study. To subject their origins, their environments, their historical, literary, and grammatical structures to critical investigation would constitute in itself a sacrilege.

God has not seemed to regard any other works of his creation in this way. He has peopled the far spaces with innumerable worlds. But, so far as yet discovered, a very chief service of these worlds is that they have served to magnify, to glorify, the mind of man. However far off and unapproachably sacred to the thought of some other generations these worlds may have seemed, the modern man has demonstrated a capacity for annihilating their distances, measuring their orbs, analyzing their substances; and in doing this he has given indubitable proof of his kingship in the universe. He has given demonstration that a single human mind capable of building its track of thought through the void may justly be accounted as of greater worth in the sight of God than all the dumb worlds in space. God has never chided man for the attempt critically to study the structure of the material universe.

An inspired apostle has designated the human body as the very "temple of the Holy Ghost." It ought not to require much imagination to feel the sacredness of the human body. It is a vital mechanism worthy of a divine creation. It surely is something not to be profaned. But profanation of the body is its physical abuse, the failure to observe the sacred laws of health, its prostitution to lust, to drunkenness, to gluttony. The body, however divine its function as the temple of the Holy Ghost, is never profaned by a reverent study of its mechanism. The scientific knowledge of the human body has discovered and illuminated the vital conditions of health, has prepared the foundations for all the beneficent ministries of enlightened medicine and surgery. The critical mastery of its physiology has yielded immeasurable values to human life.

Not unakin to the protest which has been raised against a critical study of things regarded as sacred in nature is the religious protest entered against a critical study of the Sacred Scriptures. The true function of criticism is to ascertain intrinsic truth, truth fundamental and vital in the situation. It is difficult to see how such a process can work harm in any realm. In so far as criticism is corrective, revisionary, it may necessitate the abandonment of old, and

the acceptance of new, views. This doubtless, in some cases, will result in mental disturbance and dislodgment to those who have been grounded in traditional interpretations. Such is a price always to be paid for the world's enlarging knowledge. Mental dislodgments, however, are not the worst things to happen in the world of thought. Christ himself was a great disturber of the traditions of his time. Mental dislodgment was a common symptom manifest under the influence of his teaching. He did not hesitate to take entire responsibility for the consequences.

When a morbid condition inheres in the physical system, it is eminently desirable that its causes should be removed, however drastic the process required. In the matter of intellectual health it may happen that mental morbidity is the result of a mind overloaded with devitalized, unassimilable traditionalism. This condition may, in instances, be so far advanced as to be incurable, hopeless. In any event, it cannot be helped by any process of mental quackery. Some, unfortunately, will suffer mentally from a failure ever to come in contact with helpfully corrective sources. In the meantime it would be helpful if all men could be reminded that the history, the literature, and the grammar of all the books of the



Bible, when most perfectly ascertained, are not synonymous with, and are never to be substituted for, a saving personal faith in Jesus Christ. Personal religion is one thing; biblical criticism quite another.

There can be no doubt that the entire Church, especially its Protestant section, is awaking to the high values accruing to Christian thought from a reverent and competent criticism of the Bible. This process has already saved the Bible to much of the world's best intellect. The time is not far away when the secured results of a reverent criticism will be happily domesticated in the common Christian thought, and when all will rejoice in a vast securement, correction, and enrichment of Scripture knowledge such as only a reverent and enlightened criticism can yield. In the meantime the protest, and sometimes the vehement denunciation, indulged by good people against the application of critical study to the Bible, doubtless arises from lack of appreciation of the normal and legitimate critical function with which God himself has endowed the human mind. There still lurks widely in popular thought an old-time and essentially disreputable suspicion that in some way intellectual culture is a foe to spirituality. Erasmus, a foremost scholar of his day, indulged in the bitter gibe

that "Our theologians call it a sign of holiness to be unable to read." The Nonconformist minister of whom Brierley tells us, who had never allowed himself to study German because "German religious thought was so unsettling," stands, it is to be feared, as a type of a mental survival which unfortunately is far from extinct in our day. It seems an ironical anomaly of the times that, while in all the professions and standard industries there is a constant looking for new knowledge and new appliances of invention, in a considerable section of theological thought ignorance is still at a premium. Of course this state of thought would naturally linger with that type of mind which contents itself with the belief that all spiritual truth has been delivered once for all. The assumption of a final, complete, and stereotyped revelation, however irrational in itself, would suggest the possibilities of mental restfulness, and might prove itself well adapted to the mentally indolent. The assumption is against history, against experience. It is false. The Christian mind, under the inspiration and illumination of the Divine Spirit, is an ordained path-finder into ever new fields of experience and truth. The Holy Spirit quickens mental insight just as certainly as he works in any other faculty of the human soul.

But man is far more and other than a being simply of heart, of conscience, of will, or of intellect. He is preeminently a social being. He stands related to a world of his fellows. The real significance of his life grows out of his social relations. Society is the school in which his individuality comes to expression, in which his powers find development, the school which brings to him self-discipline and training for service. Were it conceivable that by any means a child could grow from infancy to full physical stature without social environment, such a person could represent only the most rudimentary development of character. It is the reaction of other lives upon the child, in the home, in school, in society, through which alone his powers come to the full. And here we have presented to us the great world-school of man's religious obligation, of his spiritual opportunity. As society puts its building and shaping hand upon the individual, so in turn the individual puts his own creative touch upon the lives that are about him.

The dynamic logic of this situation has forced the Church to enlarge its conception of the function of Christianity in the earth. The individualistic conception of salvation for the life to come can no longer monopolize Christian thought. Christ's own idea, that upon which

he laid so continuous emphasis in the announcements of his kingdom, namely, that of the moral renewal and reconstruction of human society in this present world, is now, though late, claiming its rightful place in Christian convictions. Viewed in historic retrospect, it is astonishing how modern is this apprehension in Christian thought. Through modern eyes alone have we come to see that the whole largeness of this conception was clearly anticipated in the thought of Jesus. Most of the Christian centuries have passed with all too little practical embodiment of God's world-plan in the working diagram of the Church. The vision of Christianity to-day, as never before, is one of world-outlook. The heart of Christianity throbs with universal sympathy. This temper is Christian, but as a living force in civilization it is newborn.

By the dominant statecrafts and theologies of the past this temper was little felt. To most classic ancient thought the outsider was regarded as an enemy whom it was right to destroy. The spirit of tribal animosities has had long survival in the historic creeds. For the larger part of the Christian centuries a majority of the Church has believed that even God has reprobated vast numbers of the human race. Catholics and Protestants have glared at each

other in the spirit of mutual hate. Even the Protestant denominations, dwelling in the same communities, have been so dogmatic and narrow as each to concede little to the Christian status of the other.

As opposed to all this, a great change has come in these very modern days. A vital and balmy springtime is advancing upon the world of Christian thought. The full, strong note of a growing harmony is borne upon the spiritual atmospheres of the times. Christian thought, with clear vision and unmistakable emphasis, is coming to view the whole human race as the field of God's redemptive work. Humanity is a solidarity, one brotherhood. The race as a whole can reach its highest levels only as all its peoples and tribes are lifted to the enlightenments and fellowships of brotherhood in Jesus Christ. It is this vision that furnishes inspiration for all the phenomenal and prophetic movements of modern missions. This vision is rapidly creating in all the Church a new sense of the value of Christian unity and of cooperation in the work of Christ's universal Kingdom. The broadest-minded Christians of the day are enthusiastic volunteers in the army of the new unities. To the keenest spiritual sense of the times a narrow, and divisive sectarianism is becoming a thing of increasing abhorrence.

But God's voice, speaking through the spiritual sense, does not summon the thought of men simply to the larger spiritual unities, nor to the far fields of evangelical opportunity. He makes upon every man personally, and for the entire scope of his activities and influence, an uncompromising demand for ethical living. The inner motive of business must be that of honest dealing. The man of superior privilege must absolutely take no ill-advantage of his less favored neighbor. The rich must be a real brother of the poor. In the handling of his treasure he must be sensitively responsive to his obligation as a steward of Christ. Each man, in his sphere, must feel the responsibility of service. To each, in the social organism, there is allotted some special sphere of duty which he alone can best fill. Service is the binding law of the Christian life. To the obedient it furnishes a supreme reward both of usefulness and of joy. It was to Christ both meat and drink to do the will of his Father in heaven.

When the individual, in his personal life, in the home, in society, in civic relations, in all relations, lives ethically after the ideal Christian standard, there will be a new standardization for the whole life of the community. This would mean both in business and in the State,

no more soulless corporations, corporations exercising an unscrupulous use of power for selfish and unjust ends. It would mean the ethical administration of public office, the absence of graft from politics. It would mean the merciless uprooting and exorcism from society of evil traffics, of traffic in intemperance, of organized ministries to lust, of everything that works ill to the social organism. It would mean opportunity for childhood, justice to the poor, the practical installment everywhere of just standards of human worth. This field is one of infinite suggestiveness. It is as broad in its claims as man's capacity for thought and service. It is in all this unlimited field, in its every last and minutest section, that the Holy Spirit makes demand upon human life. When we speak, then, of Christian experience, it is manifestly something, both in its ideal and normal scope, far broader than has as yet been very generally realized either in the conception or practice of the ordinary religious life. To be a Christian, in Christ's sense, is the loftiest realization possible to man.

The age is indebted to Rudolf Eucken for much clear and exceptionally powerful statement of spiritual truth. In his volume *Can We Still Be Christians?* he seems to take somewhat

dubious views of the present world-states of Christianity. Taking into full view the great advances of modern civilization, in learning, in wealth, in the bewildering multiplication of inventive appliances ministering to the luxury of life, he still vividly shows that unless mankind shall come under the governance of some higher spiritual principle, such as that idealized in Christianity, then, notwithstanding all of its intellectual and material wealth, the human race awaits only the doom of moral bankruptcy and hopelessness.

The Christian faith owes much to Eucken for his clear showing of the world's helplessness without some supreme spiritual guidance such as that which he clearly concedes is found more perfectly represented in Christianity than in all other sources. Yet from a careful effort to understand him, I can but be impressed that Eucken himself fails in apprehension of an adequate measurement of the genius, adaptability, and sufficiency of Christianity for fully meeting the moral and spiritual needs of humanity. The spirit of Christianity has been too narrowly measured. When seen in its all-inspiring perfection it cannot fail to demonstrate itself as the supreme Light, Hope, and Salvation of the race. Christianity will succeed. It can have no final rival. If, apparently, it



has in any sense proven a failure, such apparent failure is best accounted for on Lessing's basis that Christianity as a system of world-moral government has never yet been fairly tried.

On an unlimited scale does the Holy Spirit deal with the interests of human life. On such a scale only can the significance of the ideal Christian experience itself be measured. The high values of such experience touch infinite areas.



# **IV**

## **CONVERSION**

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.—*2 Corinthians 5. 17.*

The students most hostile to the claim of orthodox Christianity willingly concede the importance of the fact of conversion in the life of the early Church. The transitions in personal life are so numerous and so well marked that they cannot be overlooked. The critic is forced to concede the fact of these spiritual phenomena and their moral genuineness. He may think the early believers deluded, but he can find no explanation which will account for the spread of Christianity and for the endurance with which it lasted through the fires of persecution other than the transformation wrought in the inner life of the believers in Christianity. The critic will not deny that the early believers in Christianity were from the ranks of ordinary people like ourselves, and that through the influence of their belief they became transformed into marvels of moral persistence and endurance.—*Bishop Francis J. McConnell.*

It is a fact of experience that whenever we submit utterly, affectionately, irreversibly to the best we know, at that instant there flashes through us with quick, splendid interior unexpected illumination, a Power not ourselves. It is a fixed natural law that when the soul yields utterly to God, he streams into the spirit, giving a new sense of his presence and imparting a strength unknown before.—*Joseph Cook.*

As we proceed farther in our inquiry we shall see that what is attained is often an altogether new level of spiritual vitality, a relatively heroic level, in which impossible things have become possible, and new energies and endurances are shown. The personality is changed, the man *is* born anew.—*William James.*

## CHAPTER IV

### CONVERSION

THE term "conversion," in the Christian sense, has been declared to represent the greatest moral event in human experience. It means the turning of the soul's vision toward the face of God. It is an experience which can come only from the surrender of will and heart to the Divine Spirit. Its processes, like the dawn, may come without observation; but they really mean for the individual transformation of the spirit, the birth of a new moral springtime in the soul, the dating of a new spiritual life. Conversion often announces itself in an inrush of divine joy, an illuminating ecstasy, an inexpressible sense of spiritual emancipation. It is something distinct from all previous experiences, as though the soul had come newly into a transfiguring and rapturous life. If conversion really means a new-found harmony of the soul with God, a harmony wrought by the inworking Spirit, bringing forgiveness, illumination, a new joy, unwonted spiritual strength to the life, then indeed

conversion must rank as a superlative event in the moral history of any man. It means the merger of a human soul with the life of God.

A wide historic view must teach us that the phenomena of conversion have not always been confined to historic Christendom. And if the view, as previously expressed, of the omnipresent mission of the Holy Spirit as enlightening every man that cometh into the world, is true, then, under the ministry of the same Holy Spirit, moral transformations, or conversions, may occur among all races and under all religious systems.

Manifestly, experiences so wrought are bereft of vital advantages which attend conversions in an atmosphere of Christian instruction and example, but that outside the Christian community there should be found no spiritually transformed characters would be a gratuitous and sinister assumption. No less a conspicuous and sound theologian than Dr. William Newton Clarke teaches that: "To Christian philosophy, every upward movement of the human mind suggests that Christ, in his universal relation to humanity, may be able to pour his new life into open hearts, even where there is complete ignorance concerning the fact of his history and work."

The present discussion, however, will be

confined to illustrations found within the limits of historical Christianity. The narratives of the Old Testament are richly suggestive in phenomenal incidents as relating to conversion. When we enter the New Testament we find great stress laid upon both the necessity and the actual experience of conversion as initial to the Christian life. It radically connects transformation of both character and conduct with conversion. This change is set forth under such figures as: "a translation out of darkness into marvelous light"; "being born again, born from above"; "redemption from all iniquity"; "passing out of death into life"; "turning from the power of Satan unto God"; "a new creation"; "putting off an old, and putting on a new man"; "becoming children of God"; "having Christ dwelling in the heart by faith"; "dying and rising again."

Such are a few of the vivid figures of the New Testament picturing conversion and its fruits. Their import is unmistakable. There can be no weakening of their meaning. Their color is both vivid and enduring.

Our present intellectual mood is one fruitful of religious psychology. The psychic phenomena of the religious life are being profoundly searched, defined, and classified. This process should prove no menace to faith. Our confi-

dence in a divine relation to the soul's conversion need not in the least be jarred. The processes of conversion, however divinely effectuated, doubtless conform to the constitutional laws of the soul—laws which God himself originally ordained. All that psychology can do is, from its acquired knowledge of mental laws, to trace processes in conversion. But this is by no means to assign or to define the Cause, or causes, of conversion itself. Psychology is only one department of philosophy. All that all philosophy can do at its best is to give orderly classification to processes that may be apparent in whatever field of nature. Philosophy when it enters upon the task of defining or of assigning law to the action of the ultimate Cause is as impotent as a child. No philosophic vision is keen enough to trace the visible path along which God moves in his creations of life and of soul. What is true in the higher realm of spirit is just as true for workers in all departments of physical science. All that science can do is to discover, and to trace if it may, orderly processes in nature. That invisible and omnipotent Cause which ordains these processes is one which forever transcends the vision of science. It would seem that the scientist, in whatever field, ought to be among the most reverent of men. His pursuits are



always on the borderland of the Infinite Mystery.

It would doubtless be good for a working Christianity if all its teachers and preachers were versed in psychology. This would render impossible many stupid blunders now committed, and it would redeem the life of the Church from many scandals of intellectual absurdity. But it would still remain that beyond the borderland of all psychological exploration the Christian faith sees infinite room for the divine working. However familiar one may become, then, with what William James has pronounced the "peripheral and central" regions of mind, the ideas and feelings lying near the periphery being frozen and inoperative, while those at the center are hot and alive; and of how at conversion the peripheral ideas and feelings change places with the central, thus silencing old ideas and feelings, and at the heated center bringing to life and expression ideas and feelings hitherto voiceless—whatever one may think or believe about all this, he is no nearer accounting for divine causes in conversion than at the beginning. Indeed, William James himself suggests that these very conditions which he describes may be the channels which God himself has ordained as his approaches to the soul.

Philosophy is quite powerless to yield to us

highest satisfactions in our attempts to explore spiritual experiences and their causes. Life is more than philosophy. For the Christian life we shall find no so reliable rule as that pragmatic rule announced by our Lord, "By their fruits ye shall know them." This utterance of Christ is valid for the highest ranges of experience. As tested by this criterion, Christian conversion has proven itself as of the highest significance and value in human history. The very universal range of its phenomena carries its reality beyond all rational skepticism. The reality of Christian conversion has been indubitably attested through the centuries by unnumbered millions of witnesses, multitudes of whom represent the most competent minds of the race. The expression of this experience has voiced itself through all ranges of human ability, from the highest genius down to men of the most ordinary mentality. But, as we would judge of the quality and possibilities of music from the productions of highest musical genius, so in summoning witnesses to demonstrate the practical values of Christian conversion we may very properly call upon those not only intellectually most competent but whose personal Christian experience has reached the highest levels. In passing, it should be clearly stated and definitely emphasized that Christian values

in character are not always coupled with intense, nor necessarily with very conscious, emotional experience. Doubtless both temperament and mental habit have much to do in deciding emotional action. While it is true that religious experience stirs the emotional soul, no mistake could be more mischievous than to assume to measure the values of religious character by the emotional test. The most vital condition to Christian character is an intelligent surrender of the will and affections to the divine will. This may occur without great emotional accompaniment. But wherever this has taken place a new life is installed in the heart, and the unemotional subject of that life may be most soldierly heroic and loyal in all essential qualities of Christian character.

In summoning witnesses to the divine fact of Christian conversion, the case of Saul of Tarsus should not be omitted. The narrative of his conversion is fairly plowed into the structure of Christian history. Paul has been called a visionary and an epileptic, and, therefore, an unreliable witness. But, as Professor Borden P. Bowne once suggested, "Saint Paul may have had a fit on the road to Damascus, but it has been the only known fit to be followed by such mighty historical consequences."

In the light of "historical consequences" such criticism as the foregoing stands out in naked absurdity. The fact is that Saint Paul was one of the most dynamic characters of all history. He was a man of superlative gifts, rich in culture, of towering ambitions, of imperial will. While still young he attained to commanding position in the Jewish nation. His Pharisaical zeal was unlimited and apparently unquenchable. Highly moral in life, conscientious to the last degree, his convictions were rock-firm. He was ready to oppose to the death those whom he believed to be enemies of the true religion. He was the trusted and zealous emissary of the Jewish Church. To no man of all his people was there promised a more brilliant career.

But suddenly one day something happened in his life. There came to him a revelation in a light so blinding as to smite him to the earth. He both saw the face and heard the voice of Jesus, whom he was persecuting. There was flashed into him the consciousness that he was fighting against God. From that moment he turned his back upon all his previous life, upon his friends, his ambitions, his worldly possessions and prospects. From that moment, with a changed spirit, he entered upon a new life.

He gave himself as a very slave to Jesus Christ. His new life, from its very beginning, was marked by an amazing series of physical hardships, suffering, privation, and peril. His was an unbroken exemplification of the highest character, tempers, and conduct. In the face of all obstacles he gave himself in unstinted sacrifice, that he might preach Christ to all men. No persecution could daunt his courage, no hardship quench his zeal. In physical weakness and in strength, in privation and want, in plenty and in hunger, in season and out of season he wrought with unabating ardor to fulfill the calling given him of Jesus Christ. He never succumbed to discouragements. He commanded the secret of a holy joy amid the most depressing environments. His spirit rose in sublime fortitude in hours of severest trial. He was a gentleman, a great lover of men, thoughtful of others when himself in want—and all this always.

One day, under the escort of a Roman guard, he was led forth from prison to the headsman's ax. He neither murmured, nor was he fearful. His fortitude failed not. His last remark was one of exultant confidence that death was to him the gate to triumphant coronation. Thus there passed into history a moral Colossus, a man whose thought has

swayed the Christian centuries, one whose very example has been an inspiration to high fortitude and endeavor for martyrs and saints for two millenniums. The career of Saul of Tarsus, both as persecutor and apostle, is indelibly written in history. His Christian conversion, the superlative moral heroism of his entire after life, culminating at last in martyrdom, have never been explained on natural grounds. They form a history of a human life such as we could expect only from the continuous girdings and support of Divinest inspirations. If God, by his Spirit, were not distinctively in this life, then we may as well at once abandon all claim to spiritual values as evidenced in what we know as "Christian conversion."

Later, but still in the early centuries, there is furnished one other preeminent instance of phenomenal conversion. In the ages from Paul to Luther, there appears no more illustrious name than that of Augustine. He was born in Numidia just after the middle of the fourth century. He was highly educated, thoroughly at home in the foremost philosophical thought of his times, a man of enormous native powers. He entered upon a brilliant career as rhetorician and advocate, the profession of which he practiced successively at

Tagaste, Carthage, Rome, and Milan. His early intellectual life wavered between a pronounced skepticism and a sort of philosophic faith. He was withal a libertine, thoroughly under the thrall of sensuality. But, with all his waywardness, he was never able to escape the holy example of his Christian mother—Monica. In his Confessions he relates as clearly as Saint Paul had done before him the struggle that went on between his higher and lower selfhood. His conscience urged him to righteousness of life; his lusts held him in bondage. Time and again he made promise of reform, but the allurements of the flesh kept him irresolute.

One day, when in his garden behind his lodgings in Milan, he seemed to hear a voice which said to him, "Take and read." This was repeated three times over. He opened the Bible apparently at random, and his eye fell upon these words of Saint Paul: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."

The passage searched him as by a lightning

flash. He made instant surrender of soul. From that moment his life, with unwavering consecration of its tremendous forces, was dedicated to a new career. . He developed a religious genius of the highest order. He lived the life of a saint. Eucken characterizes him as the "single great philosopher on the basis of Christianity proper the world has had." While he professed himself interested only "in God and the soul," his thought, like a searchlight, shot out into all questions that pertained to human life. Harnack, in substance, says of him:

In point of fact, the whole development of Western life, in all its phases, was powerfully affected by his teaching. This, his unique ascendancy in the direction of the thought and life of the West, is due in part to the particular period in history in which his work was done, in part to the richness and depth of his mind and the force of his individuality, and in part to the special circumstances of his conversion to Christianity. He stood on the watershed of two worlds. The old world was passing away; the new world was entering upon its heritage; and it fell to him to mediate the transference of the culture of the one to the other. It has been strikingly remarked that the miserable existence of the Roman empire in the West almost seems to have been prolonged for the express purpose of affording an opportunity for the influence of Augustine to be exerted on universal history.

From that day of his conversion Augustine



lived the life of a great Christian. His theology and philosophy, more than those of any other man who has ever lived, with the possible exception of Saint Paul, has ruled the thought of the Church. The genius of his mind and heart has very largely decided the course of Christian history even down to our own times. The Christian life of Augustine, not less than that of Saint Paul, must be accredited to the sovereign incoming and abiding of God into the soul of a great human genius.

I have specially emphasized the cases of Paul and of Augustine, because of the imperishable celebrity of these men. Philosophy, though sometimes unsympathetic, has been compelled to take full note of their religious history. But by no means, in the discussion of this subject, is one under the necessity of confining himself to exceptional characters. The student of the phenomena of Christian conversion is embarrassed by the very wealth of his material. One standing on the cliffs might as well undertake to count the numberless waves of the sea, as to attempt a summons of all competent witnesses to this Christian experience. The succession of these witnesses has been unbroken through the centuries, and their numbers have formed an

ever-growing and countless army. Conversion is a standing moral miracle in history. Its operation has by no means been confined to the wise and the gifted. It has found a chief ministry of regeneration and illumination among the common and unlettered, among the wayfarers and toilers of mankind. Christ himself pronounced beatitudes upon the meek, the poor, the persecuted.

It awakened the scorn and ridicule of the haughty and exclusive circles in the classic civilizations that in the ranks of early Christianity "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble" were enrolled. But there dwelt in this gospel which so appealed to poor and ordinary men an uplifting and transforming power so mighty as morally to face that ancient world toward new ideals. Christianity rapidly spread over the Roman empire, and its own ideals were widely substituted for the classical philosophies. While making its appeals to all strata of society, Christianity carried in itself an uplifting, a creative and inspiring, power which no pagan philosophy, no imperial edicts, could successfully withstand. It was a power which turned that ancient "world upside down." Christianity has always shown a marvelous power for uplifting, illuminating, ennobling the

common man. From its humblest social ranks, many of its illustrious workers have been lifted to the glory of apostolic careers. But this innumerable army of witnesses—all, both great and small, larger and less—has come to the Kingdom through the portal of Christian conversion.

What are some of the evidential values of conversion and of the religious experience to which it is the introduction? When it comes to the downright proof of any moral question rational logic is frequently unequal to the situation. Religion is more a matter of life than of logic. Life reports itself through experience, and leaves logic to take care of itself. Still, if religious experience is to validate itself in practical values for life, it is a necessity of reason that the criteria of such experience should fall within rational rule. In an attempt to state the conditions and limitations under which rational validity can be given to experience, I know of no one who has more successfully or conclusively accomplished this task, than Professor H. Bisseker, of Richmond College, London. That this writer may speak for himself, I quote here in full the four criteria which he lays down:

We would suggest four effective tests of the validity of an inward experience:

1. It must be in harmony with reason, and must fit naturally into the general framework of our knowledge. It may, of course, transcend the limits of knowledge which unaided reason has yet attained, but it may not contradict reason.

2. It must accord with man's own inner constitution. All contact with truth will help forward man's self-realization, and every step toward full self-realization implies a nearer approach to the unification of the self. An inward experience, therefore, which claims validity must tend to inward harmony of personality, and help to unify life.

3. If the experience be of an ethical or religious character, it must, further, be in agreement with the highest moral sense of the race, and action on the assumption of its validity must carry a man further morally than action based on theories less true. Applied universally, it must be such as would secure universal progress.

4. It must be capable of becoming universal. That which is ultimately true can scarcely be accessible only to a limited esoteric circle. Hence an inward experience that would justify its validity to others must be such that each who fulfills the needful conditions shall be able to attain it in all its essential characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

As this writer proceeds to say: "These criteria may be accepted without a single reservation in the realm of religious experience." Under the fourth test our author calls just attention to a difficulty which might to some minds query the acceptance of this test. As has already been noted, the phenomenal, or

<sup>1</sup> See *The Chief Corner-Stone*, Dr. W. T. Davison, editor, pp. 225ff.

emotional, experience in conversion is far from uniform in different subjects. It has been a matter of serious concern to many sincere minds that they have never been able to realize in their own experience a duplication of certain emotional phenomena to which others have joyfully testified in their conversion. Many have sought for a like experience, and it has been a grave disappointment to them that they have found it not. At this point seemingly certain types of religious experience do not seem capable of universal attainment. We may not forget, however, that the validity of religious experience must have final attestation on ethical rather than on emotional tests. "And there it can securely rest. For the main outline of evangelical experience—the change in the direction of the will, the exercise of faith in the power of Christ, the resulting transformation of both mind and heart, and the consequent moral progress, steadily advancing toward the fullest self-realization—this, without doubt, is possible to all."

All souls that struggle to aspire,  
All hearts of prayer by thee are lit.

The remaining chapters of this study will be devoted to inquiry as to some of the evidential values of religious experience.



**PART SECOND**  
**EVIDENTIAL VALUES**





**V**

**CHRISTIAN CHARACTER**

The dear Lord's best interpreters  
Are humble human souls;  
The Gospel of a life like theirs  
Is more than books or scrolls.  
From scheme and creed the light goes out,  
The saintly fact survives:  
The blessed Master none can doubt  
Revealed in holy lives.

—John G. Whittier.

For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.—*Ephesians* 5. 9.

That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.—*Philippians* 2. 15.

There are multitudes of men and women in out-of-the-way places, in backwoods, towns and uneventful farms, who are the salt of the earth and the light of the world in their communities, because they have had experiences which revealed to them Realities that their neighbors missed, and powers to live by which the mere "churchgoers" failed to find.—*Professor Maurice Jones*.

The supreme question for modern civilization is the formation of character. Of what use are our material advancements if they leave only a dismal emptiness within? Of what use carrying the people at sixty miles an hour if they are fools when they get into the train and fools when they get out? Of what use our latest telegraphy if it flings across the world no better news than of commercial frauds, of society intrigues, of the follies of the rich, and the discontent of the poor? You may start your common schools, and train your children into clever devils—to thief better, to lie more plausibly. You may teach them to read, that they may saturate their minds with filth. Any education that is not first and foremost a training in character is only a preparation for villainy's more effective service.—*J. Brierley*.

## CHAPTER V

### CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

THE word "character" is old. In form it is almost a direct transference from the Greek. It originally stood for the tool of the stamper, as also for the impression made, as in the stamping of a coin. It stood for an identity, for a distinctive marking of values. It came in course of time to take on other meanings. Webster has given the following, which well defines its modern uses: "The sum of qualities or features, by which a person or a thing is distinguished from others; the aggregate of distinctive mental and moral qualities belonging to an individual or a race as a whole; the stamp of individuality impressed by nature, education, or habit; that which a person or thing really is; essential peculiarity; kind; sort; nature."

The distinctive emergence of the word "character" into moral uses is perhaps more due to Kant than to any other writer. He taught that moral character alone is character in the true sense. His view is that what is

commonly called natural character, including physical quality, native disposition, and temperament, is merely what nature has made a man. Moral character is something which a man makes for himself. The factors which enter into the making of a man's natural character have been well indicated by Principal Fairbairn. He names six factors: "race, family, place, time, education, and opportunity." These factors contribute to a man all that simply natural conditions can furnish. "The most that the natural view expects from a man is that he be equal to the sum of all the conditions concerned in his making. If he transcends them, then we are landed either in an insolubility or in the recognition of an unknown factor which may be named personal genius, but can hardly be described as normal or according to law. In any case this appeal to an undiscovered or incalculable cause differs only in name from the appeal to the supernatural."

Moral character, in the Kantian sense, is moral inwardness. This kind of character comes only from an habitual, purposeful training of the will and conscience in accordance with the demands of an enlightened understanding. Character thus means a structure built by disciplinary processes in conformity

to morally ennobling ideals. It remains true, however, that character built after the most rugged order of self-discipline, may still be very far from Christian. Disciplined character was conspicuously developed in the schools of ancient Stoicism. Kant himself was much influenced by Stoical ideals.

Real character, good or bad, is the outcome of cumulative processes. Ideals allure the mind. The alluring fruit is plucked and tasted. The taste begets appetite, desire. Appetite creates demand for repetition, indulgence. Repeated indulgence begets habit, fixity; and this means the shaping of the soul into molds which habit forms, character, the setting of a life in the direction of its destiny. Whether this direction is toward good or ill will depend upon the quality of the shaping ideals, those invisible forces which give finality to the controlling habit. All high and valuable character is a product of slow growth, growth toward a definite goal. It is something to be shaped by intelligent purpose, nurtured in watchfulness, self-discipline, self-denial, and always urged on by diligent effort. It is not a thing of mere chance or of spontaneous growth. Pestalozzi once said: "Toadstools may easily spring forth from a dunghill when it rains; but human dignity, spiritual depth, and great-

ness of character do not grow out of routine even when the sun shines." It thus appears that moral character, character of a kind to command the approval, the esteem, and the emulation of men, is a prize for which a price must be paid, even the price of eternal vigilance.

With all this, when we come to study the claims for, and the grounds of, distinctively Christian character, we pass to a new realm of thought and experience. With no undue claim, and with no irrational assumption, it is to be asserted that Christian experience is realized only in a spiritual environment with which a nonspiritual, or agnostic, philosophy has no qualification for dealing. It was fundamental in the teaching of Saint Paul that the merely natural man cannot know the things of the Spirit, for they are to be spiritually discerned. However difficult to philosophic reason may seem this doctrine, however audacious its challenge to the pride of intellect, it rests vitally at the very foundations of Christian experience.

The Christian religion, as no other historic faith, calls for a direct, conscious, and vital relationship of the individual soul to God. It means really an indwelling of God in the life of the soul. Its fundamental assumptions are: that for man as a sinner God has insti-

tuted an effective redemption from sin; that upon the penitent soul the Divine Spirit sets the direct seal of pardon; that in the pardoned soul there is wrought a moral regeneration, begetting within that soul a new, divine life; that to the soul thus newborn God specifically, distinctively imparts himself. It is a function of the Spirit to bring to this soul a sense of its adoption into God's spiritual household, a comforting sense of pardon for sin, a luminous consciousness of a new life begun in God. All this initially. In all the after Christian life the Holy Spirit is to companion himself with the life of the obedient believer. He abides with this soul as Illumination, Inspiration, Moral Reenforcement, Sanctifier, Guide; so that within the life there are richly and increasingly begotten the fruits of the Spirit, such as "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Of course this is a radical program. It is a program so removed from the experience of the natural man, that Saint Paul frankly declares that to such it may seem foolishness. But nothing less than this, Christianity declares, is God's purpose to be experimentally realized in human life. This program imperiously and uncompromisingly insists that it shall be tested upon its own conditions. It

must be tried by its own laws. It yields to no jurisdiction of unsympathetic criticism or of alien philosophy. It requires absolute surrender and obedience of soul. Its initiates enter the luminous life only through the narrow portals of repentance, obedience, faith. Christ said, "If any man will do his will, he *shall know* of the doctrine."

It ought to be profitable to glance briefly at the biblical ideals of the godly character. Central among the precepts of the Old Testament is the demand for "goodness." "Depart from evil, and do good." Men are held responsible for moral distinctions: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" "Trust in the Lord, and do good." "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" In the later historic developments of the Hebrew religion less and less stress was laid upon the outer and ritual performances of worship, and an increasing emphasis was laid upon the hidden motives of the soul. Jeremiah, the prophet of spiritual vision, placed Israel's ideal in the period when God should make a new covenant with his people, putting



his law in their inward parts, and writing it in their hearts.

In the New Testament we discover that Jesus adds both extension, depth, and clearness to the prophetic conception of the godly character. The goodness of God is with him absolute. He also sees in men infinite possibilities of goodness. He places upon his followers the most imperative and exacting demands for goodness. With him all values center in motives. The heart must be first pure before the life can yield good fruits. Not that which is without, but that which is within, defileth the man. From an evil heart proceed the evils of life. By their fruits ye shall know them. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. Christ's moral mission with men deals regeneratively at the very seats of the soul. Righteousness and goodness must be centrally enthroned before the life can move out on the highway of Christian character. The peculiarity and perfection of Christ's system is that he not only presents in himself the perfect, the flawless, example of goodness, but, as we have already emphasized, he perfectly imparts his own Spirit to all who fully give themselves to him. He came that he might give power to men to become the sons of God, even to as many as should believe on his name.

No teaching could be more definite, clear, or radical than the pronouncements of Saint Paul upon the new life in Christ. To him the Christian life is a life exalted and separate in the world. Its subjects are distinct from all other characters. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The spiritual life is begotten, is born, from above. The Spirit of God himself witnesses to the sonship of his own spiritual children. We "know that we abide in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." Paul makes a sharp discrimination between those who are obedient and those who are disobedient to Christ Jesus. The former he describes as the "children of light," the latter as the "children of darkness." The children of light are those who walk in the Spirit, and they are known by their characters, "for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness and truth." Again he says: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Thus, in two distinct statements, the apostle presents "goodness" as one of the fruits of the Spirit. It would seem that no terms more expressive than those used could be employed to set forth the kind of character

which is expected of the Spirit-guided man—"all goodness, righteousness, and truth."

There can be no doubt as to the distinctive and positive teaching of the New Testament as to the standards of Christian character. If this teaching is true, then Christianity installs a new order of moral life in human society. We are forced to believe that God himself has undertaken through Christianity the building of a new spiritual kingdom in the earth, a kingdom the ultimate purpose of which is the spiritual transformation of mankind. Preeminent among the qualities of citizenship in this kingdom is that which Christ and Saint Paul both so distinctly emphasize—"goodness," righteousness, saintliness of character. So much for biblical ideals. How, then? Are all the demands of the Bible for a distinct righteousness of character utopian and impracticable? Are all the high ideals of the New Testament for the individual and for civilization only absurd and foolish dreams? Let us ask twenty centuries of Christian history to give us answer.

The most persistent, transforming, and uplifting single force in civilization for the last two thousand years has been the Christian religion. Let it be admitted that in many periods of its history its essential power and

## 116      RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

purity have been much neutralized by the intermingling in its life of alien and worldly elements. Nevertheless, Christianity in its entire course has borne on its bosom the world's weal. Its history has been attended by all the reforms that have proven of value to human society. Wherever it has prevailed it has created a high standard of social morality, has begotten among men a helpful sense of human brotherhood, has invested the life of the poor with an atmosphere of sympathy and of hope, has inspired the noblest ministries of benevolence for the unfortunate and the needy. It has exalted everywhere the ideals of human worth by presenting God as the Father of all souls, and by holding before all men the possibilities of a glorified immortality.

Throughout its history Christianity has been the creator and always the promoter of every good which has ministered to the social, intellectual, and moral life of mankind. Historic Christianity took its rise in a most forbidding world, a world in which government, religions, castes, traditions, social and moral customs, all of which would seem to be invulnerable to the new faith, were leagued against it. The Roman world had wondrously gathered into itself at this time the great laws, philosophies, and religions of mankind. Regnant in

all lands from the Euphrates to the Pillars of Hercules, Rome was now more cosmopolitan, especially in its philosophy and religion, than had ever been true of any preceding civilization. Herself the most legally imperial of governments, highly jealous of her prerogatives, her heritage was rich in ideals of the most perfect art, in philosophies the greatest to which human thought had ever given birth, and in her Pantheon she had domesticated the most diverse religions. Her general atmosphere was favorable to large freedom of thought. But, notwithstanding her unlimited dominion, her vast heirship of intellect and of art, and the wide latitude of her religious hospitality, this Rome was effete and dissolute. There inhered in her communities all extremes of wealth and of poverty, of luxury and of wretchedness. Her society was caste-ridden. For the slave and the poor, the haughty aristocrat had no more regard than for so many beasts of burden. Rome was the mistress of the world, but in the very height of her power her most privileged life was cynical, faithless, dissolute, blasé, hopeless.

If we were to consider alone the moral and social conditions of this pagan world, they were such as to make seemingly impossible the success of a new religion founded by a Galilæan

Peasant, himself born in an ox-shed, and meeting death at last by crucifixion. The peasant would be despised, and his crucifixion would be accepted as a brand of deepest criminality. But if to all this we add the fact that Christianity in its very nature carried the most open challenge and rebuke against the cherished traditions and social customs of this powerful world, it can appear no less than a veritable miracle of Almightyness that it could have secured for itself any standing whatsoever in that Roman world. To the philosophic mind the preaching of the cross was foolishness. To the imperial vision the proposal to establish a new spiritual kingdom among men was an absurdity. To the powerful and the haughty it was unthinkable that a religion having such an origin could really bring any ministry to their deepest needs. Its social standing was too humble and despised to command for it any favor, much less a welcome, in fashionable circles of that imperial age. Christ unhesitatingly began, and carried on, his ministry among the poor. This in itself was an affront to the ruling social life. For a long period it was a contemptuous taunt against Christianity that it recruited its subjects from the slaves and outcast populations, from those whom society branded as sinners and harlots. Moreover,

Christianity moved under standards on which were inscribed ideals of a new and divinely inspired character. It called for the highest and purest moral conduct in the life of its subjects. Its very program awakened against it the intense ridicule and resentment of the age to which it came.

Another historic element of opposition to be duly considered, is that which arose in the Hebrew community. The Hebrew religion had a large place among the faiths tolerated in Rome. Christ himself was a Jew. But his method called for such radical departure from, such revision and enlargement of, the outstanding things in Hebrew usage, as, if he were to succeed, to result in the very displacement of the Hebrew religion itself. Naturally, Christianity early drew to itself intense opposition from the Jewish community. The inevitable outcome was that the official power of Judaism employed itself in promoting the most violent opposition to the Christian faith.

The outcome of all was that a religion which at first seemed of so obscure and contemptible an origin as to command for itself only a judgment of scorn and ridicule, yet, as for mysterious reasons it continued to grow, finally drew to itself the most formidable and destructive persecution which could be devised

by the inventive genius, or carried into execution by the seeming omnipotence, of the Roman empire. The ordeal of fire and blood, an ordeal of torture and of cruelty as inspired by official fury, which thus tested the very life of early Christianity, is something which surpasses the power of our imagination to picture.

The fact to be emphasized is that there was some prophetic inspiration, some moral quality, inhering in the faith of those early Christians that made them invincible against all human opposition. After the Roman authorities had done their worst, Tertullian could say to them: "All your ingenious cruelties can accomplish nothing; they are only a lure to this sect. Our numbers increase the more you destroy us. The blood of the Christians is their seed. . . . We are a people of yesterday, and yet we have filled every place belonging to you—cities, islands, castles, towns, assemblies, your very camp, your tribes, companies, palace, senate, forum. We leave your temples only. You count your armies, but our numbers in a single province will be greater."

In the year A. D. 30, about the time of the crucifixion, the followers of Christ may have numbered about five hundred. By A. D. 100 the disciples had increased to five hundred thousand. By A. D. 311, when the fires of



martyrdom had died out and the arms of the executioners were palsied from overuse, the long orgie of human butchery having exhausted itself, the Christians numbered thirty million, and a Christian emperor sat upon the throne of the Cæsars. At the close of the entire tragic series it was the testimony of Tertullian that Christians had been persecuted more on account of their religion than for all other causes. We are to emphasize the fact that they were persecuted because of their outstanding character, because of the austere purity of their morals, because of their unswerving loyalty to their convictions, because of their firm and open nonconformity to what they regarded as forbidden usages, yet usages thoroughly domesticated in the social and moral life of the age. All this was made a ground of capital offense against the Christians.

And what finally were the offenses of these Christians? They utterly refused to join in the deification of the emperors. They would not take a pagan oath. They would not join in the rites of pagan worship. They were, in many cases, opposed to military service. They gave no countenance to the bloody games of the amphitheater and kindred spectacles. In their very multiplicity, they became a menace to the faiths of polytheism throughout the

empire. A complaint that Celsus made against them was that they were "men walling themselves off and isolating themselves from mankind." He charged them with disloyalty to the state, and as impairing the solidity of the civilized world by their departure from the common belief. To many of the charges of Celsus the Christians would, indeed, have to plead guilty. They did abstain from the faiths and rites of paganism. They were bound in all conscience to stand by the demands of their faith, a faith which from its very nature was out of harmony with, and which must enter its protest and denial against, much of the ruling customs and faiths of the age.

The history of these early Christians is indeed marvelous. It can be accounted for on no basis of creed or of organization. Christianity had both creed and organization. But the real and only secret of its persistence and growth was in the life of God as experienced in the souls of men. This life proved itself invincible in the face of all opposition. Its influence, wherever felt, was transforming. It created a new motive and a new character wherever it entered into the life of men. Justin Martyr, the cool-headed philosopher, eloquently says that everywhere in the wake of Christianity were to be found "slaves of sensuality

who had become pure in morals, the avaricious and miserly who gave themselves in generous ministry to those in need, and the revengeful who had learned to pray for their enemies." He attributes all this to the grace of Jesus Christ as experienced in the lives of these men. Origen testifies to great numbers of persons who through the same grace were recovered from licentiousness, injustice, and covetousness.

In considering the power of Christianity to transform, and to give new characters to, sinful and bad men, it seems well-nigh invidious to cite single instances. The reformation and salvation, the installment into right living, of abandoned and otherwise hopeless men is the standing miracle of Christianity. It was the sneer of Celsus and of Lucian, the classical satirists, that Christianity exploited itself in the reformation of slaves, of thieves, and that it sought its trophies among the very off-scourings of human society. The fact which robs the sneer of its sting is the ages-long demonstration which Christianity has furnished of its power to lift the representatives of these very classes into pure and saintly character. Neither history nor philosophy any longer neglects nor scorns to give candid attention to this class of phenomena.

Gibbon's prepossessions were not favorable to Christianity. We are hardly prepared to expect from him fair treatment for even the Christian name. But prejudiced historian though he was, he says, "The primitive Christian demonstrated his faith by his virtues." Speaking of the emperor, Constantine, he says: "Under the manifest inadequacy of pagan philosophy to reform the morals of the people, he might observe with pleasure the progress of a religion which diffused among the people a pure, benevolent, and universal system of ethics, adapted to every duty and every condition of life; recommended as the will and reason of the supreme Deity, and enforced by the sanction of eternal rewards and punishments."

Lecky, the famous historian of European morals, says:

There can indeed be little doubt that, for nearly two hundred years after its establishment in Europe, the Christian community exhibited a moral purity which, if it has been equaled, has never for any long period been surpassed. Completely separated from the Roman world that was around them, abstaining alike from political life, from appeals to the tribunals, and from military occupations, looking forward continually to the immediate advent of their Master, and to the destruction of the empire in which they dwelt, and animated by all the fervor of a young religion, the Christians found

within themselves a whole order of ideas and feelings sufficiently powerful to guard them from the contamination of their age.

Doctor T. R. Glover, in his great work *The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*, declares of the early Christians:

They were astonishingly upright, pure, and honest; they were serious; and they had in themselves inexplicable reserves of moral force and a happiness far beyond anything that the world knew. They were transfigured, as they owned. Some would confess to wasted and evil lives, but something had happened, which they connected with Jesus, or a Holy Spirit, but everything in the long run turned upon Jesus. . . . That Christianity retained its own character in the face of the most desperate efforts of its friends to turn it into a philosophy congenial to the philosophies of the day was the result of the strong hold it had taken upon innumerable simple people, who had found in it the power of God in the transformation of their own characters and instincts, and who clung to Jesus Christ, to the great objective facts of his incarnation and his death upon the cross, as the firm foundation laid in the rock against which the floods of theory might beat in vain.

William James, clear-headed and cool-hearted as a philosopher, thought it worth his while to give distinct and exhaustive study to this very field. He certainly cannot be charged with any special leaning to "evangelical orthodoxy," nor with overbias toward traditional

creeds. It is all the more interesting to note his open-minded and high valuation of the facts of Christian conversion. However searchingly he may have traced the psychology of the process, he does not deny the divineness of its cause, nor its permanent values for character and life. He has gathered many remarkable instances of Christian conversion. From these, I cite one, not simply because of its typical character, but especially for the reason that its subject came somewhat intimately under my own observation. The experience of Mr. S. H. Hadley is related as follows:

One Tuesday evening I sat in a saloon in Harlem, a homeless, a friendless, dying drunkard. I had pawned or sold everything that would bring a drink. I could not sleep unless I was dead drunk. I had not eaten for days, and for four nights preceding I had suffered with delirium tremens, or the horrors, from midnight till morning. I had often said: "I will never be a tramp. I will never be cornered, for when that time comes, if it ever comes, I will find a home in the bottom of the river." As I sat thinking I seemed to feel some great and mighty presence. I did not know then what it was. I did learn afterward that it was Jesus, the sinner's friend. I walked up to the bar and pounded it with my fist till I made the glasses rattle. Those who stood by drinking looked on with scornful curiosity. I said I would never take another drink, if I died on the street, and really I felt as though that would happen before morning. Something

said, "If you want to keep this promise, go and have yourself locked up." I went to the nearest station house and had myself locked up.

I was placed in a narrow cell, and it seemed as though all the demons that could find room came in that place with me. This was not all the company I had either. No, praise the Lord; that dear Spirit that came to me in the saloon was present and said, "Pray." I did pray, and though I did not feel any great help, I kept on praying. As soon as I was able to leave my cell I was taken to the police court and remanded back to the cell. I was finally released, and found my way to my brother's house, where every care was given me. While lying in bed the admonishing Spirit never left me, and when I arose the following Sabbath morning I felt that day would decide my fate, and toward evening it came into my head to go to Jerry McAuley's Mission. I went. The house was packed, and with great difficulty I made my way to the space near the platform. There I saw the apostle to the drunkard and the outcast—that man of God, Jerry McAuley. He rose, and amid deep silence told his experience. There was a sincerity about this man that carried conviction with it, and I found myself saying, "I wonder if God can save *me*?" I listened to the testimony of twenty-five or thirty persons, every one of whom had been saved from rum, and I made up my mind that I would be saved or die right there. When the invitation was given, I knelt down with a crowd of drunkards. Jerry made the first prayer. Then Mrs. McAuley prayed fervently for us. O, what a conflict was going on for my poor soul! A blessed whisper said, "Come"; the devil said, "Be careful." I halted but for a moment, and then, with a breaking heart, I said, "Dear Jesus,

can you help me?" Never with mortal tongue can I describe that moment. Although up to that moment my soul had been filled with indescribable gloom, I felt the glorious brightness of the noonday sun shine into my heart. I felt I was a free man. O the precious feeling of safety, of freedom, of resting on Jesus! I felt that Christ with all his brightness and power had come into my life; that, indeed, old things had passed away and all things had become new.

From that moment till now I have never wanted a drink of whisky, and I have never seen money enough to make me take one. I promised God that night that if he would take away my appetite for strong drink, I would work for him all my life. He has done his part, and I have been trying to do mine.

This is a very wonderful narrative. But from years of observation of Samuel H. Hadley, I can personally testify to the fact that he lived a pure and highly useful Christian life, dying at last in the most vivid triumphs of the Christian faith.

Harold Begbie, in his *Twice Born Men*, a book which has had a multitude of readers, gives a photographic description of several equally striking cases. Browning, in *Ned Bratts*, has invested such a biography with his own poetic genius. The foregoing citations from the general fields of history and philosophy are sufficient to indicate something of the impression which the demonstrated power



of Christianity to transform and to morally uplift human character has made upon the great reviewers of the world's deeds and thought. Before, however, taking leave of the definite, and exceedingly important and fruitful, subject of this chapter, it will be profitable for us briefly to review some of the larger fields in the history of modern Christianity.

The character-product attributable alone to the indwelling of God's Spirit in the human soul has been a distinct, rich, and continuous phenomenon in all the Christian ages. History fairly stated seems not more definitely to testify to anything than to the fact that Christian character is a product of God's indwelling and inworking Spirit in the soul of man. To deny this would be to leave the regenerative work of Christianity an outstanding enigma. To deny this would be to classify Christianity itself as a superfluous thing in the world's history. To deny this would be, in the light of the obvious and gravest moral needs of the race, to shut away from human view any just ground of hope for a regenerated and transformed spiritual future.

In all periods of its highest life, and of its most signal moral conquests, the Church has most emphasized the doctrine and experience of the Spirit in the life of the believer. In

the first two and a half centuries it was not formulated creed, not ecclesiastical organization, not political cohesion, but the witnessing and testifying life of the Spirit that fed and fanned the quenchless fires of the faith. As has been emphasized, the Church of this period faced the concentrated scorn and ridicule of the world; its appointed and unavoidable path lay through an inferno of persecution and martyrdom, the very story of which has appalled the heart of subsequent ages. Yet the spirit of this Church was invincible, and its storm-swept path is signalized and made illustrious by the great saints and confessors who form an unbroken succession in its history.

The period of the Reformation is distinctly luminous by its insistence upon the presence and work of the Spirit in the lives of men. In our casual reflections upon this great period a few names, such as Wycliffe, Huss, Calvin, Zwingli, and Knox, naturally occupy the foreground of our thought, and perhaps to the exclusion of a multitude of lesser characters who wrought vitally in this world-crisis. The Reformers, the Reformation itself, were gravely handicapped by dogmas and traditions which centuries of ecclesiastical domination had imposed upon human thought. The Reformation, however great and beneficent in itself, left

in popular belief large areas of error from which the Christian thinking of future ages alone could work complete emancipation. The Reformation is not to be belittled. It was an epoch in which the moral levels of the world were visibly raised. It was a great emergence in which large sections of the Christian Church left behind them Egyptian bondage, and went forth into territories of new intellectual and spiritual liberty, territories rich in the prophecy of a new progress for mankind.

But the one great discovery of the Reformation, the one thing which gave it chief significance, was its proclamation of the Divine Spirit in his relations to the life of the individual soul. Luther himself, like many of the greatest spiritual teachers, was lifted to a new level and to a new vision, by what for his whole after-career was an epoch-making spiritual revelation. As a typical confession of his faith he once wrote: "No man can understand God or God's Word unless he has it revealed immediately by the Holy Ghost; but nobody can receive anything from the Holy Ghost unless he experience it. In experience the Holy Ghost teaches us in his own school, outside of which nothing of value can be learned."

In relation to the distinctive doctrines and experiences of the Spirit, no single movement is perhaps more instructive than that of Methodism. John Wesley, the recognized founder and leader of the Methodist movement, was highly educated, strictly moral, conscientiously religious. In type his mind was highly philosophical. John Snaith has said of Wesley:

In some respects he was much superior to Hegel, in others he was much inferior. If Hegel and Wesley could have been blended into one person, such a person would have been near the stature of the apostle Paul. At any rate, it only requires the logical philosophy of the Spirit as unfolded by Hegel infused into that of Wesley, or Wesley's into that of Hegel, to have a philosophy of the Spirit as nearly perfect as possible.

Yet, up to a given period, Wesley was almost entirely lacking in that definite power which afterward transformed him into the peerless evangelist of the Christian ages. After long and, what appeared to be, fruitless endeavor, he was one day startled by the direct question, "Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?" To this question he gave solicitous attention and study for about two years. Under what would appear very simple circumstances, as in a revealing flash, he suddenly felt his "heart

strangely warmed.” He says: “An assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.” This experience was epochal. It dated for John Wesley the beginnings of an evangelical career which ranks him hardly second to any of the great workers of the Christian Church.

Wesley was now thirty-five years of age. He lived to the age of eighty-eight years. It is not too much to say that in the remaining fifty-three years he lived in a broad arena, and in the most open publicity, the life of a saint. He died the most noted man in England. He was revered, honored, and loved as no other man of his day. The great emphasis of his religious teaching was upon the regenerating and witnessing mission of the Holy Spirit in the soul of the believer. He was the chief leader and organizer of a great spiritual movement. To-day, to say nothing of the generations of Methodists dead, many millions of living witnesses are enrolled in those distinctive communions of which he is the recognized founder. As in all large aggregations of human nature, Methodism in parts may have been characterized by limitations, weaknesses, and faults. But, in the sum of its life, covering a period of more than one hundred and seventy-

five years, it has furnished to the world a great army of exemplary Christian lives, and has increased the calendar of saints by many names worthy of the best traditions of the apostolic age. The soundness of the spiritual interpretation of such regenerative movements as were led by Wesley is sufficiently evidenced by the fact that they never arise save under the dynamic of high spiritual inspirations. Such movements can be accounted for only by the incoming of the Spirit of Pentecost upon the lives and hearts of the community.

In connection with any sane and safe teaching concerning the Spirit's transforming and character-forming mission, there are several facts to be guarded and emphasized:

First. It would be a one-sided and essentially false view to lay a chief stress upon the power and value of Christianity as simply the transformation and the making of good characters out of bad and apparently abandoned men. Origen long ago declared that the greater number of those found in the churches are "converted from a not very wicked life," rather than from those "who have committed the most abominable sins." Timothy, Paul's "beloved son in the gospel," was from infancy responsive to the highest moral influences. The prevailing fact is that

among the really most valuable Christian characters—the men and the women most firmly grounded in the faith, most deeply experienced in spiritual things, in whose lives there are most perfectly developed the Christian graces, and who are the most radiant examples of settled trustfulness of soul, peace of mind, and of Christian fruitfulness, qualities which best attest the rule of the Spirit over the life—a great majority of all these have not come from the ranks of outbroken sinfulness, but are to be numbered among those who from earliest life have been reared in a healthy moral and social environment. I can have no doubt that goodness in any life is a Spirit-nurtured growth. The fruits of the spiritual heritage are of wide distribution. It would be a moral tragedy of society were this not the fact. Any child born and reared in Christian atmospheres must, by virtue of this very fact, be forever different in character and quality from what would be possible in the absence of such environment. Lives are made better or worse by virtue of good inheritances. If the heir of such inheritances willfully sins against his birthright, his perversion of character thereby becomes the more treasonable and tragic. On the other hand, in the measure in which his life conforms to the better ideals

of his inheritance, by so much is he worthy of approbation. When a mere lad, with as yet no developed ability to think my way discriminatingly through the subject, I was mentally disturbed by a statement more than once made by zealous circuit-riding pastors, to the effect that a man of moral life was a far greater obstacle to the Kingdom than an outbrealking sinner. This kind of teaching seemed to me, even then, like putting a premium upon a bad life. Such teaching is a moral heresy. Its assumption is thoroughly unethical. The man who from elect motives leads an upright life is far nearer the kingdom of God than is at all possible to the profane and abandoned sinner. Men of high motives should be a common heritage to the Christian community. Children trained in Christian homes should by reason of that very fact be the most valuable recruits of the Church.

Second. To justly judge the validity of a work of grace in the life of the individual, due regard must be had to several features, such as environment, habit, temperament, mental and moral capacity, of the person concerned. There are some characters in whom, when apparently divine grace has wrought at its best, there still inhere rugged and uncouth characteristics which seem inborn in the indi-



vidual. It does not follow that some lives in which have really been wrought miracles of grace will appear more, or even as, perfect outwardly as do some other lives which seem to have been quite fully shaped by natural inheritance, temperament, or acquired culture. Apropos to this subject, James makes a quotation from Emerson and then makes his own rejoinder. Emerson says: "When we see a soul whose acts are regal, graceful, and pleasant as roses, we must thank God that such things can be and are, and not turn sourly on the angel and say: 'Crump is a better man, with his grunting resistance to all his native devils.' "

"True enough," says James, "yet Crump may really be the better Crump, for his inner discords and second birth; and your once-born 'regal' character, though, indeed, always better than poor Crump, may fall far short of what he individually might be had he only some Crump-like capacity for compunction over his own peculiar diabolisms, graceful and pleasant and invariably gentlemanly as these may be."

The transforming grace of the Spirit, however deep or wonderful its work in the soul, never utterly obliterates or transcends the native lines or limitations of individuality. Some men have great capacity, large culture, and fine harmony of temperament. The Spirit

harmonizes with these qualities, beautifies them, and lifts them into their best expression. Another person is not built on this scale. He may suffer not only from natural limitations, but from defects of habit. Even divine grace can work only on such foundations as it finds in the individual. But when the man of one talent, and of crippling limitations, is saved, he is saved for all he is worth. He is saved with a great salvation. To him his spiritual conversion will always remain the greatest fact in his moral history.

Third. In assessing the values of Christian experience it is to be remembered that not all subjects have a uniform, or a like phenomenal, experience either in conversion or in the after developments of character. As a matter of observation, men seemingly come into the Christian life under a great variety and diversity of phenomenal expression. We have already seen that this presents no real ground of difficulty. The religious motive appeals to the deepest life, and is from its very nature adapted, when in full action, to stir profoundly the emotions.

This motive, when it has a clear hearing, makes imperious demands upon the entire personality. It is not strange that in the hour of crisis it should prove an agitating

presence in the entire field of consciousness. But this emotional action will be far more pronounced in some cases than in others. The phenomenal expression will depend much upon the native temperament and aptitudes of the individual. In some natures the emotions will voice themselves like the breaking forth of a pent tide. In other cases the calm will and the introspective interrogation will hold emotion in abeyance, and, whatever happens, even though the processes of profound moral change are going on in the soul, the movement is quiet and wanting in outward, or phenomenal, expression. It has taken many spiritual workers a long time—and even now the lesson is not well learned—to make due discrimination between what may be only phenomenal and that which is vitally essential in spiritual conversion. The essential thing is that the soul be in the attitude, and without reservation, of complete self-surrender to the sway of the Spirit. It cannot even reach this attitude without the preliminary aids of the Spirit himself. But when this condition is realized, the seeking, the soliciting, Spirit enters the life to work the most momentous moral events in the soul. This is the supreme thing. Are the emotions stirred? This is normal. But if, without emotion, there is the quiet discern-

ment of dawn, the touch of a new springtime, the sensing of a new moral life, in the soul; this too is normal.

Ignorance of spiritual laws has led to much infelicity of spiritual teaching, amounting often to a quackery of method, in the insistence that a certain type of emotional experience is essential as evidence of Christian conversion. Great numbers of the best Christians have been needlessly troubled at this point. Insistence upon this standard or criterion of entrance upon the Christian life, has amounted in many cases to an infliction of cruelty upon most sincere seekers after the true way. A true psychology must declare this sort of teaching, so far as professional aptitude is concerned, as discreditable as maladroitness surgery.

The emphasis of the Christian life is to be put upon its ethical quality. The real Christian is one who is obedient to Jesus Christ. He is a doer rather than a feeler. It was Christ's meat and drink to *do* the will of his Father in heaven. In his final valuation of his followers it is the doer of God's will whom he approves. Christ would not leave Peter in the reverie of a transfiguration, but took him down into the valley where devils were to be cast out of men. Whatever be the emo-

tional register, whether sustained excitement is present or absent, the man who has accepted the mastery of Jesus Christ, is one in whom the Divine Spirit is developing the fruits of righteousness. There will reign in his soul the serenity of a man at peace with God. The real need is the mind which was in Jesus Christ. If one have this mind, and practice it, the religious emotions may safely be left to take care of themselves. This man, as by an un-failing gravitation, is borne ever forward toward a perfecting Christian character.

Fourth. The testimony of Christian character, as that also of experience, attains its highest evidential values, not from sporadic individual cases, but from the massed consensus of the Christian life. Christianity is historic. Its Kingdom has had a continuous and increasing growth through the centuries. Its citizenship, with an unbroken continuity of thought and expression, has, through all ages, spoken in one spiritual language. The Christian inspirations have uttered themselves among all races and in all generations, begetting everywhere in human hearts and characters the same moral response. The songs of Christian experience have, the races over and the ages through, voiced themselves as in the harmonies of a universal symphony. Mingled

with the individual consciousness, now and then, there may have arisen phenomena both illusory and worthless. But, when all allowance is made for ephemeral and dreamlike illusions of the occasional individual, these will not be found to impair in the least either the significance or the value of the universal Christian experience and testimony. As to the significance of these there can be no ignoring and no misunderstanding.

The phenomena of the Christian experience, and the distinctiveness of the Christian character, are too cosmic to admit of either historic or philosophic denial. In this relation, the central and dominating fact to be emphasized is that the religious consciousness of Jesus Christ is the regulative norm of Christian consciousness for all ages and for all peoples. The Christianity of Christ is historically and abundantly demonstrated to be morally creative, transforming, uplifting, altruistic, hope-inspiring, as no other, and not all other, religious faiths. Christianity, therefore, carries in itself the prophecy and the pledge of its universality. The future moral perfection of mankind is to be realized only by the final dominance in civilization of the Christian character.

Fifth. We must not confound the psychology

of religious experience with the ultimate Cause and Source of this experience. Psychology has profoundly searched the phenomena accompanying Christian conversion and the subsequent development of Christian character, and has reached valid analyses and assessments of these phenomena. But this is no more to say that psychology actually accounts for, or does away with the necessity of, the distinctive divine causality and action in Christian conversion than that the botanist who classifies plants and analyzes their structures thereby explains the vital principle of their development. Psychology is a great clarifier of knowledge. It exposes delusions and eliminates false factors of faith. It reduces the processes of experience on their human side to rational clearness and credibility. It so philosophically illuminates our emotional experiences as to leave no intelligent excuse for either juggling with, or giving false interpretation to, these experiences. God has given to the human soul its distinct constitution. If the soul is a harp, God's play upon this instrument must move within the limits of its laws. It is the legitimate function of psychology to study and to know the laws and possibilities of the instrument. But when the great Player brings forth the harmonies of celestial music, psy-

chology has no right to forget that the Player is God.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The mode of treatment in this chapter has developed a considerable variety of statement. To facilitate review, I have thought it well to indicate the topics of the chapter in the order of their treatment, as follows:

(1) The term "character," its historic significance. (2) Christian character the result of a Divine process in the soul. (3) Biblical ideals of character. (4) The general answer of history as to the validity of these ideals. (5) Christians were persecuted because of their exceptional morals. (6) Both historian and philosopher now freely acknowledge the validity of both the Christian conversion and the Christian character. (7) Testimony of great spiritual periods in the Church, such as the Reformation and the Wesleyan Revival. (8) In a measured survey of the phenomena of Christian conversion and the subsequent development of Christian character, several important facts need to be carefully guarded and duly emphasized:

(a) It would not only be an inadequate, but a thoroughly false, view to confine the morally transforming and uplifting power of Christianity to simply bad characters.

(b) In the attempt to measure the apparent effects of divine grace upon character, due regard must be had to the qualities of the individual concerned: such as his heredity, temperament, habit, mental and moral capacity, etc.

(c) Not all subjects of Christian conversion have a uniform, or a like phenomenal, experience. Emotional phenomena furnish no valid criterion as to the genuineness of a work of grace in character.

(d) The testimony of the individual may not necessarily be accepted as a final authority for the spiritual life. The value of such testimony must finally be measured by its agreement or disagreement with the general consensus of Christian experience.

(e) While it is the proper function of psychology to investigate and assess the mental and emotional processes attendant upon Christian experience, psychology, in no sense, either substitutes or accounts for the Cause and Source of Christian experience itself.



**VI**  
**SPIRITUAL FRUITS**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.—*Galatians* 5. 22, 23.

We ourselves have observed crowded together in one day, some suffering decapitation, some of the torments of flames; so that the murderous weapon was completely blunted, and the executioners themselves, wearied with slaughter, were obliged to relieve one another. Then we were witnesses of the truly divine energy of those that believed in the Christ of God. They received the final sentence of death with gladness and exultation, so far as even to sing and to send up hymns of praise and thanksgiving until they breathed their last.—*Eusebius*.

Joy is more conspicuous in Christianity than in any other religion, and in the Bible than in any other literature. Psychologically, joy is the index of *health*, resulting from the adequate engagement and the vigorous and harmonious exercise of the powers; it is the sign that the soul has found its object.—*Dr. G. G. Findlay*.

One of the last places in the world to be regarded as a holiday resort was surely the noisome den at Bedford in which Bunyan was confined. But there was rarest holiday-making within. Not in king's palace, nor amid the noblest scenery of our isles, was there such exultation of soul, such vision of beauty, such sense of life and freedom as filled the soul of the lonely prisoner as there rose before him in his dungeon the successive scenes of that great conception which was to make him immortal. To stand on the Delectable Mountains was better than to climb the Jungfrau. Great-heart, Christian, and Faithful formed finer society than the wits of the coffee-houses. To have looked through the gates of the New Jerusalem made cheap the splendors of Paris or Rome.—*J. Brierley*.

With an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.

—*Wordsworth*.

## CHAPTER VI

### SPIRITUAL FRUITS

THE Gospel, as announced by the angel messengers, was a heralding of "Glad tidings of great joy." Joy is one of the designated fruits of the Spirit. Joy and fortitude are not synonyms. But the qualities which they express keep close company with each other. Joy and fortitude are alike direct products of Christian grace. Saint Paul was a man of superb fortitude. He was equally the apostle of joy. Few pictures are more impressive than that of Paul in prison voicing in his letter to the Philippians the notes of highest joy, and at the same time calmly, heroically, awaiting his own death at the hands of the executioner. A treatise of unique character, yet most rich in substance, is furnished in the writings of the New Testament on the subject of Christian joy. In numerous passages, and representing a great variety of conditions, there is pictured the rise of this joy in the heart. This is emphasized especially of those who have come newly into the consciousness of spiritual discipleship.

Christ, foretelling this state, declares that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." A scene following the Pentecostal revival represents the converts as meeting daily with one accord in the temple, breaking bread from house to house, and eating their meal with gladness and singleness of heart. The Thessalonian Christians, though in much affliction, received the word with joy of the Holy Ghost. Love, joy, and peace are pictured as inseparable graces wrought by the Spirit in the life of the believer. But hardly, if any, less emphasis is placed in the New Testament on the spirit of heroic fortitude which characterized the subjects of the Christian life. The path of the early Christian was not easy. He had to endure hardness as a true soldier of Jesus Christ. The scene of Paul and Silas at Philippi, arrested, scourged in the marketplace, their backs lacerated by the thongs, thrust into prison, their feet made fast in the stocks, and yet at midnight singing praises unto God, is one to challenge the vision of an artist. Saint Peter, addressing certain Christians in a period of tribulation, a period that tried their faith so as by fire, speaks of the

constancy of their faith in Jesus Christ, "Whom having not seen," he says, "ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Thus it would seem that joy and fortitude, with the entire company of kindred graces, held triumphant place in the hearts of these early New Testament Christians.

If, however, we were confined to the early Church for signal experiences in the Christian life of the high graces of joy, fortitude, faith, hope, we might be forced to conclude that Christianity itself was little more than a passing phenomenon in the world's history. Christian experience in every age has abundantly evidenced, and, it may be measuredly said, in a way nowhere else known, those invincible qualities of soul which are classed as the distinctive fruits of the Spirit.

As for fortitude, aside from the inspirations of some lofty religious faith, it was perhaps never more perfectly displayed than by the ancient Stoics. The school of Stoicism, founded by Zeno near the close of the fourth century B. C., wielded great influence in the classical world, for several hundred years. This school, while pagan in character, enjoined a high morality. It developed a somewhat distinctive and lofty conception of God, but was essen-

tially fatalistic in its philosophy. It enrolled among its adherents large numbers of reflective minds who felt the need of acquiring a philosophic calm in the midst of nature's inexorable environment. In a world where "Nature is red in tooth and claw," and where, at best, man is but the sport of the fates, himself weak and helpless in the presence of the inevitable, it was felt to be of religious value that he should secure for himself a brave, calm, enduring, and resigned spirit. It was a saying of Marcus Aurelius: "Either the gods have no power, or they have power. If they have not, why pray? If they have, why not pray for deliverance from the fear, or the desire, or the pain, which the thing causes, rather than for the withholding or the giving of the particular thing? For certainly, if they can cooperate with men, it is for these very purposes they can cooperate."

In the days of the later Stoicism, among its most illustrious representatives in Rome were Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. Seneca was a foremost philosopher; Epictetus was born a slave, but a genius; Marcus Aurelius was emperor. These men reached the highest levels of natural morality and heroism. They developed many traits and ideals of character which must forever be outstanding in the

Christian life. It is interesting in this connection to note that Bishop Bashford, in his recent great work on China, classes Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus along with Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, as men each of whom, perhaps unwittingly but no less really, accepted his cross and followed the light which God gave him. However, it must be said of Stoicism, even at its best, that it never reached the high moral plane of the Christian faith. It never acquired the secret of that unyielding fortitude which has borne multitudes of humble Christians in buoyant triumph along the gauntleted path of most inconceivably dreadful and tragic experiences. Stoicism at its highest level always made room for suicide as a door of retreat from seemingly unendurable ills. This was the door through which Seneca finally elected exit from the sorrows of his own existence. The Christian ideal has never for one moment tolerated this method of retreat. Stoicism, whatever its attainment of philosophic calm, was never joyful, never exuberant, in spirit. If Stoicism was a religion, it did not voice itself in song. It has been said that "Epictetus announces a hymn to Zeus, but he never starts the tune."

There has, upon the other hand, been no period of stress, however dire, in Christian

history which was not efflorescent with triumphant song. The Christians, even in persecution, were the happiest people of their day. The insufficiency of the most perfect fortitude of Stoicism as contrasted with the Christian type is clearly recognized and pointed out by William James. He says: "Occasionally, it is true, the Stoic rises to something like a Christian warmth of sentiment, as in the often quoted passage from Marcus Aurelius:

"Everything harmonizes with me which is harmonious to thee, O Universe. Nothing for me is too early or too late, which is in due time for thee. Everything is fruit to me which thy seasons bring, O Nature: from thee are all things, in thee are all things, to thee all things return. The poet says, Dear City of Cecrops; and wilt thou not say, Dear City of Zeus?

But compare even as devout a passage as this with a genuine Christian outpouring, and it seems a little cold. Turn, for instance, to the *Imitation of Christ*:

"Lord, thou knowest what is best; let this or that be as thou wilt. Give what thou wilt, so much as thou wilt, when thou wilt. Do with me as thou knowest best, and as shall be most to thine honor. Place me where thou wilt, and freely work thy will with me in all things. . . . when could it be evil when thou art near? I had rather be poor for thy sake than rich without thee. I choose rather to be a pilgrim upon the earth with thee,



than without thee to possess heaven. Where thou art, there is heaven; and where thou art not, behold there death and hell."

What the moralist endures by a tense effort of volition, the Christian easily spurns under the action of high religious emotion. "The moralist must hold his breath and keep his muscles tense; and so long as this athletic attitude is possible, all goes well—morality suffices. But the athletic attitude tends ever to break down, and it inevitably does break down even in the most stalwart when the organism begins to decay, or when morbid fears invade the mind. To suggest personal will and effort to one all sicklied o'er with a sense of irremediable impotence is to suggest the most impossible of things."

"There is a state of mind known to religious men, *but to no others*, in which the will to assert ourselves and hold our own has been displaced by a willingness to close our mouths and be as nothing in the floods and waterspouts of God. In this state of mind what we most dreaded has become the habitation of our safety, and the hour of our moral death has turned into our spiritual birthday. The time for tension in our soul is over, and that of happy relaxation, of calm, deep breathing, of an eternal present, with no despondent

future to be anxious about, has arrived. Fear is not held in abeyance as it is in mere morality. It is positively expunged and washed away." "Religious feeling is thus an absolute addition to the subject's range of life. It gives him a new sphere of power. When the outward battle is lost, and the outer world disowns him, it redeems and vivifies an interior world which otherwise would be an empty waste—this sort of happiness in the absolute and everlasting is what we find nowhere but in religion. . . . If you ask *how* religion thus falls on the thorns and faces death, and in the very act annuls annihilation, I cannot explain the matter, for it is religion's secret, and to understand it you must yourself have been a religious man of the extremer type."

Explain it as we may, a patient, buoyant, and exultant fortitude, a kind nowhere else fully matched, has characterized the highest Christian experiences in all the ages. The annals of martyrdom abound in instances where Christian fortitude has shown itself invincible and even joyous in the face of the most ingenious tortures and cruelties possible of infliction. When John Huss was bound to the stake, and the fagots were piled ready for the torch, the Duke of Bavaria exhorted him to be yet mindful of his salvation, and

renounce his errors. Huss replied: "What error should I renounce when I know myself guilty of none? For this was the principal end and purpose of my doctrine, that I might teach all repentance and remission of sins, according to the verity of the gospel of Jesus Christ: wherefore with a cheerful mind and courage I am here ready to suffer death."

Ridley and Latimer were martyred together. When the lighted torch was laid at Ridley's feet, Latimer said: "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." There is no need to multiply testimony from scenes of martyrdom. Those who have invincibly died for their faith are innumerable. They arise in history as a great cloud of witnesses. No type of martyrs ever displayed a more invincible fortitude than did the Chinese Christians who within the memory of this generation perished in great numbers in the Boxer Rebellion.

Miss Luella Miner, in her *China's Book of Martyrs*, relates instances of Christian heroism so thrilling as to stir the very blood:

Mrs. Yang and her two little girls were captured by the Boxers and carried to a temple. She was urged to renounce her faith and worship the idols.

Upon her prompt refusal she and her helpless children were slain. A Chinese girl was commanded to burn incense to the gods. She refused, saying: "I cannot burn incense, for I believe in Jesus. I am not afraid, even though you kill me, for I shall go straight to my heavenly Father." Hardly had she ceased speaking before the sword descended. One of the preachers, Ch'en Ta-yung, with his wife and two children were hacked to pieces by the infuriated Boxers. The mother's last words were, "We will all go to our heavenly Father together."<sup>1</sup>

The voice of John Bunyan, even in Bedford jail, was insuppressible. He was offered his liberty if he would consent to cease preaching. His reply was: "Release me to-day, and I will preach to-morrow." John Nelson, one of Wesley's early helpers, was imprisoned in a horrible dungeon located under a slaughter pen. He says, "When I came into the dungeon, that stank worse than a hog-sty by reason of the blood and filth that ran into it from the butchers who killed over it, my soul was so filled with the love of God that it was a paradise to me." John Woolman, the Indian missionary, tells us that one night, far away from tent or habitation, unable to kindle a fire because of the falling rain, he sat through the long hours under a bush and "found his soul filled with comfort as he meditated upon

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<sup>1</sup> Modern Messages from Great Hymns, by Robert Elmer Smith, pp. 152-153.

God.” Tertullian lived in the heated periods of Roman persecution. He not only witnessed many scenes of Christian martyrdom, but he lived under the constant menace of its infliction upon himself. He was a brilliant lawyer, a rhetorician. His professional possibilities in civil life were brilliant. But he sacrificed his professional career, with all its promise, when he became a Christian. In times that tried men’s souls, when the arena was red with martyrdom, when he could but know himself as a signal target for destruction, Tertullian walked his path of Christian duty with the loyalty and firmness of a soldier.

In mentioning the soldier, I am reminded that Christian fortitude and the fortitude of the soldier are not necessarily from the same source. Nor, however akin, are they the same in their motives of manifestation. The fortitude of the soldier may be most admirable. It has been exhibited on innumerable fields of most trying strife, and has held itself in bravest poise in defeat as well as in victory. Among the wonderful qualities of human nature which have come to transfiguring expression amid the maddening ravages of the present European war, none can be more wonderful than that fortitude which has held multitudes of soldiers in all the armies brave and firm

under conditions which would seem to defy all human endurance. Who shall say that patriotism is not a divine endowment? It is certainly the mother of heroisms that seem well-nigh preternatural.

But Christian fortitude, whatever the original endowment, receives its reenforcements from moral sources. "Men have learned from Christ how to find joy in pain; how to be happy when suffering and dying." And so it has been a common expression of the saintly life that men have manifested a phenomenal fortitude, a spirit of patience and of cheerful endurance, amid what would appear the most forbidding allotments of life. The saint has shown a capacity for sublime cheerfulness, for unconquerable hope, even amid conditions of adversity and illness, of thwarted hopes, of defeated ambitions, of unjust imprisonments, on lonely and trying pathways of duty in the wilderness and in the desert—pathways that have been trodden by the world's superlative heroes, pathways of sacrificial service for humanity, pathways leading to dungeon portals, to the stake, to the world's Calvaries—these have all been beaten hard by pilgrims bent on holy quest, and whose fortitude has been in-breathed from sources higher than themselves.

The Christian life, whatever its material

environment, is essentially a joyful life. Christ said to his disciples, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." It is an observation of widest Christian experience that the soul newly born into the spiritual life seeks to give expression to its unutterable bliss in some note of praise. The inspirations of this new-found bliss have, all along the ages, voiced themselves in great hymns.

Charles Wesley first entered into the conscious and great peace of the believer on Whit Sunday, May 21, 1738. On the following Tuesday at nine in the morning, he began a hymn upon his conversion in which occurs the verse:

O how shall I the goodness tell,  
Father, which thou to me hast showed?  
That I, a child of wrath and hell,  
I should be called a child of God,  
Should know, should feel my sins forgiven,  
Blest with this antepast of heaven!

On the following day, John Wesley, having come into a like experience, was brought by a troop of friends to the room of his brother, where together they sang this hymn with great joy, and parted with prayer. This hymn has been very properly designated as the "Birth-song of the Evangelical Revival."

## 160 RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Charles Wesley's spiritual joy was a perpetual glow in his soul. Under its inspirations he wrote a great wealth of hymns based on highest spiritual experiences. I quote one more from his pen. It is hymn 311 in the Methodist Hymnal:

O how happy are they,  
Who the Saviour obey,  
And have laid up their treasures above!  
Tongue can never express  
The sweet comfort and peace  
Of a soul in its earliest love.

That sweet comfort was mine,  
When the favor divine  
I first found in the blood of the Lamb;  
When my heart first believed,  
What a joy I received,  
What a heaven in Jesus's name!

'Twas a heaven below  
My Redeemer to know,  
And the angels could do nothing more,  
Than to fall at his feet,  
And the story repeat,  
And the Lover of sinners adore.

Jesus all the day long  
Was my joy and my song,  
O that all his salvation might see!  
"He hath loved me," I cried,  
"He hath suffered and died,  
To redeem a poor rebel like me."



O the rapturous height  
Of that holy delight  
Which I felt in the life-giving blood!  
Of my Saviour possessed,  
I was perfectly blessed,  
As if filled with the fulness of God.

Philip Doddridge celebrated his own conversion in a hymn which will be long sung in the Church at large as expressing the new-found joy of the Christian convert. The opening verse and the refrain of this hymn are as follows:

O happy day, that fixed my choice  
On thee, my Saviour and my God!  
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,  
And tell its raptures all abroad.  
Happy day, happy day,  
When Jesus washed my sins away:  
He taught me how to watch and pray,  
And live rejoicing every day.  
Happy day, happy day,  
When Jesus washed my sins away.

Far more space than can be here afforded could easily be taken in quoting hymns of joy, of faith, of hope, of fortitude, of triumph, exultant hymns that will be sung as long as the Christian ages last. The confident prophecies of Christian immortality have uttered themselves in the great hymns of the Church. When Dr. Ray Palmer lay dying, those who bent over

him heard him repeating the last verse of his own beautiful hymn:

“When death these mortal eyes shall seal,  
And still this throbbing heart,  
The rending vail shall thee reveal,  
All-glorious as thou art.”

The great hymns evidence the continuousness of the divine inspirations in the human soul. They are the inspired transcriptions of God's revelations of himself to elect men who have pursued him to the very higher levels of the spiritual life. On mounts of transfiguration and of immortal vision, God is still speaking to his own.

In this chapter joy and fortitude have been much dwelt upon as typical fruits of the Spirit. We must remember, however, that in the synthesis of the Christian life all the graces of the Spirit are of concurrent and mutually supportive function. Faith, Hope, Meekness, Temperance, whatsoever there is of Good Report, and whatsoever there is that is of Virtue—these all, in the symmetrical ministries of grace, blend in the interplay of the soul's life. Faith in the immortal and heavenly life has contributed vastly to the fortitude of the Christian believer. The amazing firmness of the early martyrs was attributed by Celsus and other pagan writers to what was termed

their "superstitious" belief in immortality. Christ himself taught that we are not to fear man, who, at his worst, can only destroy the body, but, rather, fear God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Much modern emphasis is laid upon the "eternal life" as a thing of quality rather than of duration. There is obviously a very vital emphasis to be laid upon the quality feature of the immortal life. But all true Christian teaching has always stressed this emphasis. Quality and endlessness have both been at the center of the Christian doctrine of immortality. Neither conception is complete without the other. The Christian, if in full possession of his faith, is one who habitually seeks in himself God-likeness. He lives also in this life as one who watchfully plans for an infinite and enduring future. In his thought the highest sanity calls for the subordination of present and fleeting interests to the enduring values of the endless life. In the most worthy sense of the term, a man could not be a Christian and so live as to be forgetful of the vital relations which his present conduct may sustain to his unending destiny. If righteousness, truth, honesty, temperance, chastity, brotherly love, charity, sacrificial service for the love of God—if these, and kindred qualities, must

enter into a true preparation of character for the life to come, then, at the denial of all opposing things, one must plan, at whatever cost, and, if needs be, at the price of severest discipline and self-denial, to make himself rich in these qualities. The scheme of the Christian life, as that of no other life, calls for largest practical reckoning with the motives of eternity. These motives, if heeded, will put a man's feet upon the highest pathways for this present life. They will hold him to a balancing vision of things eternal. It was this vision which gave invincible courage to the Christian martyrs. It was this which enabled Saint Paul, in a career of incredible privation and suffering, to say: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." It is this vision which has steadied untold thousands in sickness, in poverty, in sorrow. They too have thought of the exceeding rewards of the heavenly life: and they have been patient, heroic, even joyful all along the difficult pathways of their earthly allotment.

It may be that some, under the high stress of conviction, have too little prized the values of earthly good. A mistake is possible even in this direction. God intends the best things

of this world for his own people. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." This mistake, however if ever made, is not common. Professing Christians of the present age would seem far more in danger of being overcome by the world's passing allurements than they are to make the mistake of not placing proper values upon temporal good. A gold coin can be pressed so close as to shut the entire heavens from the vision of the eye. Christian faith is far-sighted. As the mariner guides his ship on trackless seas by the light of distant stars, so Christian destiny must be guided by the beacons of eternity. To-morrow we leave earth forever behind us. Then that which is before us, that alone, will be of supreme moment. Christ taught clearly the necessity of deliberate forecast, the necessity of building upon sure foundations, if men would enter into life.



**VII**  
**CHRISTIAN SERVICE**

The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me,  
Because Jehovah hath anointed me to proclaim glad tidings  
to the poor;  
He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives,  
And the bursting of the prison to them that are bound;  
To proclaim the year of Jehovah's favor,  
And the day of vengeance of our God.

If God could evolve man and civilization from a world of reptiles, surely it will be a lesser task to evolve an earthly paradise from the world that is. Man's measureless progress in the past is a pledge of future progress.

"Till upon earth's grateful sod  
Rests the city of our God."

—*Dr. Josiah Strong.*

The future is lighted for us with the radiant colors of hope. Strife and sorrow shall disappear. Peace and love shall reign supreme. The dream of poets, the lesson of priest and prophet, the inspiration of the great musician, is confirmed in the light of modern knowledge; and, as we gird ourselves for the work of life we may look forward to the time when in the truest sense the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever, King of kings and Lord of lords.

—*Professor John Fiske.*

If the conception of the kingdom of God came to be the working faith of our modern world, every business man would confront the question whether his business as a total, in the goods it turns out and in the men it employs, is advancing or retarding the reign of God on earth. Our entire business system would be under the condemnation of religion until it was an institutionalized expression of the Christian law of mutual service. If our business men engaged in reorganizing business for that higher end, they could for the first time in history have the same ennobling sense of serving God which a minister, a teacher, or a mother may now have. They are now a disinherited class in religion. They have a religious sense of worth mainly when they are doing something for their church or their philanthropies outside of their business. The kingdom faith, once lodged in a man's mind, compels every man to become a redeemer, and his chief redemptive ministry is through his job.—*Professor Walter Rauschenbusch.*



## CHAPTER VII

### CHRISTIAN SERVICE

CHRISTIANITY means a measureless weal for humanity. Its wealth of inspiration and of ministry, so far from being exhausted, is as yet unexplored. The kingdom of Christ seems slow in asserting its rightful regnancy in the earth. Its practical dominion in civilization, like all great cosmic movements, is of seeming slow development. Its approach to that

. . . one far-off divine event  
To which the whole creation moves

is really apprehended only in the vision of the seer. To one who breathes only the sordid spirit of the world, who feels that he must be perpetually on guard against the aggressions of an unscrupulous and grasping selfishness, who perhaps in his own business has been hurt by a conscienceless and destructive competition, there comes the easy temptation to pessimism. He may lose faith in Christian goodness, because sorely tempted to believe that Christianity as a practical rule of life is a failure. It is to be feared that too many

men, men of generally good purposes, are more or less victims of this vicious philosophy. This state of mind is unfortunate. It is morally pitiable. It is a nether view, one immeasurably below the plane of healthy Christian inspirations.

The Church itself has suffered great scandal from its own professed adherents whose conduct has given too much justification for this view. There are men enrolled in church membership who attend worship, who give money for the support of Christian institutions, yet whose churchianity is no sure guarantee of their ethical soundness. They play one role in the church, and quite another in the market place. This kind of thing has occurred with sufficient frequency to furnish to the lips of the scoffer the cynical charge that "Christianity is either a fraud, or it is played out." The spirit in which this charge is made is never admirable. The charge itself is no argument against Christianity. At worst, it only shows that there are either defective or false members in the formal enrollment of church membership, persons in whose hearts and lives the true Christian spirit has not come to enthronement. Christianity, as yet, is far from having come fully to its own in human society.

As a corrective of cheap and shallow pessimism one needs to keep company with history. With all the imperfections and shadows that darken the present civilizations, one cannot traverse the long backward vistas without discovering that humanity as a whole now stands on higher moral and spiritual levels, is in possession of vaster realms of intelligence, and is actuated by a nobler benevolence, than was ever true of any preceding age. Certainly a great moral leaven is working in the forward-moving tides of history. In the so-called Christian civilizations, fine spiritual ideals were never so imperative, there never was such a wealth of organized education and benevolence, never so many agencies ministering to human weal as now. Let one take a survey of the pagan nations, and in them all map out the work of Christian missions, acquainting himself with the history of these missions, their history of heroic service and sacrifice, their transforming, ameliorating and uplifting ministries, the colonies of spiritual enlightenment which they have raised up in the dark places of the earth—and he must be callous and blind indeed if not impressed that some irresistible and beneficent Power is installing a program of righteousness for the entire world. It hardly need be said that the

highest existing moral standards, the most luminous education, the largest wealth of scientific acquisition, factors which prophesy the best future for humanity, are all more largely the creation of Christianity than of all other agencies. And in just the measure in which these forces are working most beneficently they are to be found in closest company with the spirit and mission of the Christian Church.

All men need to hear the prophetic voice. They need in some way to partake of the vision of the seer. Those by whom the voice is unheard and to whom at best the vision is dim, cannot escape the twilight territories of the spiritual life. For any clear and helpful understanding of what Christianity really is, for a just measurement of its place and achievement in history, vision is needed. Christ is the incomprehensible and immeasurable character of history. At first neglected, maltreated, crucified; later, the scorn of the philosopher, his people the subjects of contempt and ridicule, and finally made victims of fiercest persecution; yet, while institutions and nations have perished, Christ has not only persisted, but with an irresistible fascination he is more and more filling the thought of the world. In the later centuries, indeed, in these very later decades,

Christ, immeasurably more than any other historic character, has drawn to himself the most critical study of the philosophic and cultured world. His enemies, as in the great drives of modern armies, have hurled against him the most formidable attacks which the most consummately resourceful and hostile criticism could devise. It is conservative to say that no man not obviously divine, no cause not invincibly grounded in truth, could have received a tithe of the destructive hostility which has been directed against Jesus Christ, and survive. But, for some reason, Christ continues to live. All weapons forged for his destruction fall shattered at his feet. He emerges from every conspiracy formed against him with character unscathed. When the din of latest controversy has been silenced, and its confusions have cleared away, he stands forth more than ever radiant in the glories of divinity.

The Church has been adversely criticized, and justly. Its purely human elements have often given it unchristlike expression. Many of its traditions, and some of its beliefs, have not been able to withstand the scrutiny of present-day thought, nor have they been found adapted to present-day needs. But not so Christ. In character, in example, in teaching,

in revelation, he always stands in advance of the age and of the world's needs. There is no evidence worthy of consideration which would lead us to believe that he himself is losing out in the world's thought. He was never so impressively divine before the vision of mankind as now. His sovereignty over the consciences of men is an ever-widening realm. So far as Christ is concerned, the book of revelation is not yet complete. The Holy Spirit by his inspirations is still taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto men. The Church has a larger vision of Christ today than was possible even to the apostolic age. Christ will continue to grow upon the world's thought, his sway will ever widen, until finally in universal acclaim he shall be hailed as Lord of lords and King of kings.

I have entitled this chapter "Christian Service." This is a great theme. It is in the very nature of Christianity to inspire the spirit of service. A distinctive mark of Christ's activity was that "He went about doing good." He seemingly lost no opportunity to serve the needy. If the value of service is measured by sacrifice, then Christ paid the full price. His life was a continuous offering for the good of others. In the sense of self-indulgence he pleased not himself; but at all times—in

hunger, in weariness, in a perpetual divorce of his life from luxuries which minister to the sense—he literally poured out the wealth of his healing sympathy upon human needs.

No man can receive the spirit of Christ without the prompting to do good. The first question asked by Saul of Tarsus, when smitten on his Damascus way, was: “What wilt thou have me to do?” His first impulse was to render some act of obedience, of service. From the day of his conversion to the day of his death he gave himself to prodigious toils. He exposed himself to untold peril, privation, and suffering, that he might serve those for whom Christ had died. No sooner was the Christian Church originated, than it was characterized by a new and distinctive spirit of charity, of benevolence, of well-doing toward all in want. One of its earliest organizations was a bureau of charities, with a choice of select, devout, and wise men for its administrators.

It would be untrue to history to deny that there has always been present in society a spirit of altruism. Noble instances of a mutual helpfulness among men abound in pagan history. It would be as false to deny the presence of mutual kindness in the communities of all races as it would to deny that God’s Spirit has been always and everywhere present to

quicken the moral life of man. A distinctive glory of Christianity is that it laid hold upon the native altruism of the human heart, and quickened it into a new and larger life, touching it with the spirit of sacrifice, and ordaining it to new and high careers of service. And so, through all the centuries of its history, Christianity has been characterized by the noblest forms of service for human needs. To this general fact history gives varied and generous testimony. Lecky says:

There can be no question that neither in practice nor in theory, neither in the institutions that were founded nor in the place that was assigned to it in the scale of duties, did charity in antiquity occupy a position at all comparable to that which has obtained by Christianity. . . . Christianity for the first time made charity a rudimentary virtue, giving it the foremost place in the moral type, and in the exhortations of its teachers. Besides its general influence in stimulating the affections, it effected a complete revolution in this sphere, by representing the poor as the special representatives of the Christian Founder, and thus making the love of Christ rather than the love of man the principle of charity. Even in the days of persecution collections for the relief of the poor were made at the Sunday meetings. The *Agapæ*, or feasts of love, were intended mainly for the poor, and food that was saved by the fasts was devoted to their benefit. A vast organization of charity, presided over by the bishops, and actively directed by the deacons, soon ramified over Christendom, till the bond of charity became the bond of unity, and the most distant sections of the Christian



Church corresponded by the interchange of mercy. Long before the era of Constantine it was observed that the charities of the Christians were so extensive—it may, perhaps, be said so excessive—that they drew very many impostors to the Church, and when the victory of Christianity was achieved, the enthusiasm for charity displayed itself in the erection of numerous institutions that were altogether unknown to the pagan world. . . . This vast and unostentatious movement of charity, operating in the village hamlet and in the lonely hospital, staunching the widow's tears and following all the windings of the poor man's griefs, presents few features the imagination can grasp, and leaves no deep impression on the mind. The greatest things are often those which are most imperfectly realized; and certainly no achievements of the Christian Church are more truly great than those which it has effected in the sphere of charity. For the first time in the history of mankind it has inspired many thousands of men and women, at the sacrifice of all worldly interests, and often under circumstances of extreme discomfort or danger, to devote their entire lives to the single object of assuaging the sufferings of humanity. It has covered the globe with countless institutions of mercy, absolutely unknown to the whole pagan world. It has indissolubly united in the minds of men the idea of supreme goodness with that of active and constant benevolence. It has placed in every parish a religious minister, who, whatever may be his other functions, has at least been officially charged with the superintendence of an organization of charity, and who finds in this office one of the most important as well as one of the most legitimate sources of his power.

The emphasis so long laid upon charity, in

the sense of almsgiving, has not proven an unmixed good in Christian history. As in the days of Christ, when some followed him on account of the loaves and fishes, so often unworthy characters have attached themselves to the Christian community on account of material benefits received. But even this is not the worst phase in the history. With the very fact of giving itself a false virtue in many cases came to be associated. The very teaching of large sections of the Church has become tainted with the notion that almsgiving is a sort of purchase price paid by the donor for a higher seat in heaven. It is a misfortune that among the consecrations and activities of Christians the mere giving of earthly goods has so long and so widely held large and disproportionate place in the conception of Christian duties and privileges. Even now multitudes seem to think their entire duty discharged when they have given a modicum of their material prosperity to the causes of charity.

The real Christian motive is something immeasurably broader and deeper than all this. Divinest and largest inspirations are coming to fruition in modern Christian life in the awakened sense of God's Fatherhood, and of the Divine Sonship and Brotherhood of man.

When any man awakens to the fact that he is potentially and rightfully God's son; that all men of all races are, as his human brothers, under God's purchase to this same heritage, there is opened to him a field of motive and of vision as broad as humanity, as high as eternity. This view becomes at once a great leveler of artificial distinctions. It illuminates Christ's practical attitude toward the poor, the unprivileged, and outcasts of society. Stripping each soul from its artificial, and it may be forbidding, garb, he measured its worth alone in the light of its divine possibilities. This view, when fairly apprehended, will clothe every human being, no matter how apparently hopeless his condition, with potentially infinite values. It leaves absolutely no space for social or caste exclusiveness in the field of evangelistic endeavor. It installs the full-orbed Christian a citizen of the entire world, a brother of all humanity. This is the motor-nerve of Christian missions. The message of Christianity is for all races. Its great light is for those who inhabit the dark places of the earth. Its message of sympathy and of healing is for the sick, the poor, the unprivileged, the hopeless among all peoples. The apprehension of this view has inspired the most superb moral heroisms of history. It

was this which made Paul, the first Christian missionary to the Gentile world, morally irresistible; this which has given him imperishable place in the admiration of mankind. It was this view which in the thirteenth century transformed Francis of Assisi from a "merry-hearted and careless fellow," from the spirit of a dude and a worldling, into one of the foremost saints of history. It was this which prompted him to lay all his wealth upon the altars of the Church, and to adopt Poverty as his bride; this which drove him in tireless ministry to the sick, the lepers, and the poor; this which sent him upon distant journeys to Illyricum, to Spain, and even to Palestine, everywhere preaching Christ, until at last, literally worn and spent, he laid himself down to die. It was this view which transformed Ignatius Loyola from an unbridled libertine into an apostolic missionary of Jesus Christ; this that sent Francisco Xavier on his perilous and ceaseless missionary journeys to Japan and to the Indies. A roll call of the indomitable founders of missionary empire would present countless names of those whose spiritual heroism has lent imperishable luster to the moral history of mankind.

William Cary, the converted cobbler, who translated the Bible into languages spoken by

three hundred million of Orientals; David Brainerd, who consecrated his talents to carrying civilization and Christianity to the savages of the wilderness; Henry Martyn, the brilliant Cambridge scholar, making by his translations the Scriptures, in whole or in part, accessible to one fourth the inhabitants of the globe; not only this, but literally spending himself in Christian labors among the poor in India, until, exhausted by fatigue and wasted by disease, he sank in death at the early age of thirty-two; Robert Morrison in China writing a grammar of the language and translating the Bible into the dialects, waiting undiscouraged seven years before being permitted to rejoice in his first convert; Chalmers in New Guinea; Paton in the South Sea Islands; Livingstone, in Christ-like passion, seeking the salvation of the Africans, forgetting that they were black and remembering only that they were fellow-mortals; and those more recent men, the Butlers, the Parkers, and the Thoburns of India; Griffith John, Timothy Richard, James W. Bashford, and Wilson S. Lewis of China—these men, inspired by the love and the heroism of the cross, have risen to the highest types of Christian character. They rank among the moral altruists of history, great in faith, great in hope, great in action, because their

own souls were filled with Christ's vision of humanity. Their service, a Christ-inspired service, can never be fully portrayed.

Sir Alexander McArthur, an eminent English publicist, says:

I believe the advancement of civilization, the extension of commerce, the increase of knowledge in arts, science, and literature, the promotion of civil and religious liberty, the development of countries rich in undiscovered mineral and vegetable wealth, are all intimately identified with and, to much a larger extent than most people are aware of, dependent upon the work of the missionaries; and I hold that the missionary has done more to civilize and to benefit the heathen world than any or all other agencies ever employed.

Bishop W. F. Oldham, born in India, and a lifelong observer of missions and missionary workers, writing of the missionaries, says:

They are revolutionizing society. They are waking ancient peoples from the graves of the past. They are kindling a new passion for freedom. They are breaking the bonds of ancient superstitions and conservative traditions. They are breathing new life into multiplied millions of the human families. If there be a rebirth in China—and the pangs of a new life are being felt in India, and the dark places of Africa are being wrested from the dominion of cruelty and lust—if, in a word, the thralldom of ignorance and wrong is being overturned in half the world, the commanding figure behind the whole movement that is doing these things is the humble missionary.

I have emphasized missionary service, because the history of this service, in an eminent manner, illustrates those high moral enthusiasms for humanity which are begotten only in the faith and experiences of Jesus Christ. When a man has really entered into Christ's vision of Divine Sonship and of Human Brotherhood, he can no longer entertain a narrow view either of duty or of opportunity in his relations to Christ's kingdom. He must awaken to a sense of true partnership with Jesus Christ in the mission of world-redemption.

If it be a fact that Jesus is revealing himself with ever-growing fullness to human thought, then, from many standpoints, it must follow that enlarging conceptions of the meaning of Christ's kingdom must enter into the Christian consciousness. There can be no doubt that the Christian world is awaking to a new and greatly enlarged view both concerning the scope of Christ's mission and the agencies of its promotion. In *Christianity and the New Age* I express perhaps as well as I am able to do my view and conviction concerning some of the promotive factors of the larger ideals. In the chapter on "Modern Prophets" the following characterization is given:

They are men of high culture, men of vision who have both large insight into and outlook upon life.

They are patriots, men with a large love of country. They are lovers of their kind, men who see the larger possibilities in human nature, and who ardently desire to remove obstacles to progress and to promote the conditions through which all men may come to their best. They are independent thinkers. They are not the hired creatures of either corporate or private interests. They are not partisans. Their vision is not blinded by greed. They are unselfish workers for humanity. They have the courage of their convictions. The most fruitful source of their ideals is the gospel of Jesus Christ. They exalt Christ himself as the supreme Teacher and Exemplar of the new humanity. They dwell in clear atmospheres of thought and of observation. The moral qualities of the social, industrial, mercantile, and political worlds are by none more clearly seen and measured than by these. To them in an eminent degree is given to view the evils, the frauds, the injustices, the oppressions of society as in the very white light of righteousness. Their indignation is aroused against all monopolistic policies, the execution of which means the depression of the social, intellectual, or moral possibilities of the poor and the defenseless. Their sense of human worth is so supreme, their view of God's impartial love for all his children so clear, that, as in the case of their ancient prototype, the word of the Lord is in their hearts as a burning fire shut up in their bones, so that they cannot refrain from lifting up their voices until the Lord shall have delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers.

Dr. William DeWitt Hyde, president of Bowdoin College, has recently issued a book entitled *The Gospel of Good Will as Revealed*



in Contemporary Scriptures. The author takes as his type of "Contemporary Scriptures" *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*; *The Servant in the House*; Thomas Mott Osborne's *Within Prison Walls*; *An American Citizen*, by John Graham Brooks; *How Belgium Saved Europe*; *Dennison's Beside the Bowery*; *Masefield's The Everlasting Mercy*; Riis's *The Making of an American* and *The Battle With the Slums*; and Churchill's *Inside of the Cup*. These selections, which Dr. Hyde has been pleased to designate as "Contemporary Scriptures," are taken from current plays, from chapters of the War, from biography, from poetry, from novels, from discussions as to the duties of citizenship and the problem of the slums.

The subtitle "Contemporary Scriptures" may possibly come with something of shock to some minds. But why? If Christianity has not by this time put its leaven into, and furnished the highest themes for, current literature, then we would have to regard it as having disastrously failed in at least a large section of its mission. Our historians, novelists, and poets are the real seers, if we have any, of the modern age. To whom may we look for luminous interpretation of loftiest faith, to whom for vision of the larger applications of Christianity to the broader needs of

humanity, if not to these elect minds? In any event, it is only a dull ear that fails to hear the prophetic voices of the age; only a purblind vision that fails to discern the rising tide of new and transforming movements which are both challenging and taxing the very genius of Christian leadership.

The signal word that lies at the heart of the modern Christian demand is—SERVICE. Good will among men is the spirit in which this service is to be fulfilled. The distinctive characteristic of the modern view is not that of alms-giving in the sense of meeting the immediate physical needs of the unfortunate, but, rather, that larger duty of Christian society to remove and to destroy the very insanitary conditions which are the breeders of social misfortune and poverty. Shailer Mathews, one of the clearest visioned of the modern prophets, has recently said: "There is only one great creative enthusiasm in American Protestantism—the gospel of a saved society as well as of saved individuals." Another brilliant modern prophet, the lamented Charles Sylvester Horne, doing his last work with young men in the school of the prophets at Yale University, said:

The young preachers of recent years have explored the contents of the word "righteousness" with the

enthusiasm of pioneers opening up rich and fertile lands for the inheritance of the future. Something has been happening even within the academic borders of our colleges. Men have been facing life as it is, and bringing it to the light of Christ. The social economist has invaded our quiet sanctuaries of religious thought with his disturbing facts and figures; and our young men have seen visions. The new compulsion has driven them down to the overcrowded areas where the disinherited of civilization make shift to exist; and the result has been that unique personal experience which changes scientific statistics into human facts. Is anyone surprised that a new note can be detected in our preaching? Does anyone marvel that young prophets are flinging down their challenge to society; and that features of industrialism which have been too long accepted as inevitable are to-day the objects of fiery arraignment by men who are looking at them through eyes which Christ has purged and enlightened? We are beginning to believe things which would have appalled our ancestors. We are beginning to believe that poverty need not exist; and that the restrictions upon human life and happiness, due to poverty, may be abolished. We see in the near future an almost indefinite elevation of the standard of living; and we throw the whole authority of Christianity into the scales in favor of the two great modern ideals, that work shall be equitably remunerated, and that wealth shall be equitably distributed.

After all, it is not strange. Great causes always create a race of prophets. The watchword of the past century was Freedom. What orators the passion for freedom created in this great land! Aye, and what martyrs for freedom it made! The watchword of our new century is Justice. It will create as splendid an army of prophets; and it may

very well be that before the victory is won, men and women will have to buy the new inheritance at great price. But buy it they will, for the master passion in the breasts of our young men is that the will of the Father shall be done "on earth as in heaven." . . . The preacher who is going forth unto the battlefield to-day for the kingdom of God on earth, will enter the fray to hearkening strains of music. The Church of God to-day does not despair of calling into existence a Christian civilization. It refuses to acquiesce in the permanence of those social vices and social wrongs that have intrenched themselves so deeply even under the visible authority of the cross. There is arising an army of young knights of Christ who have taken sacramental vows that none of their brethren shall have to live in the future under conditions that are fatal alike to physical health and to even a moderate standard of chastity and honor. They have vowed that the cruel exigencies of a merciless competition shall not always kill the truth and self-respect of those who are taken in its toils. They are resolved that the progress of humanity shall be something better and nobler than an unrelieved struggle for existence; and men something diviner than

"Dragons of the prime  
That tear each other in their slime."

Christianity must work itself vitally into all the organism of human society. It must furnish finally the practical and controlling ideals of education, of business and political ethics, of home and social intercourse, of the uses of capital. Its ideals of righteousness must be so

infused in civilization as to bring about a compact of peace and good will among the nations,

When the war-drum throbs no longer  
And the battle-flags are furled  
In the Parliament of man,  
The federation of the world.

The final ideal of Revelation is that of a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. The capital city of the new earth is the "New Jerusalem," a holy city which is to come down from God out of heaven. The foundations of this city are to be prepared by a redeemed Church. Spiritually regenerated men, men of largest intelligence and consecration, sun-crowned men, will henceforth be more than ever needed as the upbuilders of Christ's kingdom in the earth. Such are to be the moral regenerators of human society. They are to make the very earth a fit dwelling place for God and his people. This mission calls for a program of service far larger and far more varied than has yet been entertained in Christian thought. This program is such as could be inspired only by the spirit of Christianity. That Christianity has given birth to this conception is signal proof of its own divinity.



**VIII**  
**THE PRAGMATIC TEST**

What we have felt and seen  
With confidence we tell;  
And publish to the sons of men  
The signs infallible.

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.  
—*Jesus*.

Under the inspiring influence of Christ's teaching and example the Christian Church asserted the individual rights of man; recognized the divine image in every rational being; taught the common creation and the common redemption, and the destination of all for immortality and glory; raised the humble and lowly; comforted the prisoner and captive, the stranger and exile; proclaimed chastity as a fundamental virtue, elevated woman to a dignity and equality with man; upheld the sanctity of the marriage tie; laid the foundations of the Christian family and home; moderated the evils and undermined the foundations of slavery; opposed polygamy and concubinage; denounced the exposure of children as murder; made relentless war on the bloody games of the arena and circus, on the shocking indecencies of the theater, and on cruelty, oppression, and vice; infused into a heartless and loveless world the spirit of love and brotherhood; transformed sinners into saints, frail women into heroines, and lit up the darkness of the tomb by the bright ray of unending bliss of heaven.—*Philip Schaff*.

Although the career of the elder Pitt and the splendid victories by land and sea that were won during his ministry, form unquestionably the most dazzling episodes in the reign of George II, they must yield, I think, in real importance to that religious revolution which shortly before had begun in England by the preaching of the Wesleys and Whitefield.  
—*W. E. H. Lecky*.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PRAGMATIC TEST

PRAGMATISM as a distinct system is one of the younger members of the philosophic family. William James tells us that the term was first introduced into philosophy by Mr. Charles Peirce in 1878. Webster's definition of philosophical pragmatism is as follows: "The doctrine that the whole meaning of a conception is to be sought in its practical consequences, and that the purpose of thinking is to develop beliefs which shall serve as general principles of conduct."

Pragmatism as a philosophy deals primarily, it would be true perhaps to say exclusively, with the facts of experience. Dismissing substantially all abstract theories, all the posits of an arbitrary theology, all logical deductions based simply on premises of academic thought, pragmatism proposes to keep company alone with the facts of experience, and to seek from these facts the truths which shall furnish practical guidance for both faith and conduct. The difference between pragmatism and ration-

alism is stated as follows: "The one is uncomfortable away from facts; the other is comfortable only in the presence of abstractions." The habit of pragmatism is defined as "the attitude of looking away from first things, principles, categories, supposed necessities, and of looking toward last things, fruits, consequences, facts." The theory of pragmatism is that philosophy should begin its teachings about life from the standpoint of experience itself. This is the natural genius of philosophic thought. Practically, men seek to know the meaning of life's experiences here and now, experiences that rise in the very midst of life's activities. Pragmatism assumes that to know this is the key to all problems. The terminal points of life and destiny, the beginning or the end of our being, may not be unimportant subjects of thought; but we are to derive our most truthful and valuable conceptions of these from the facts and trends of life's present experiences. "Interested in no conclusions but those which our minds and our experiences work out together, she has no *a priori* prejudices against theology. If theological ideas prove to have a value for concrete life, they will be true, for pragmatism, in the sense of being good for so much. For how much more they are true will depend entirely on their

relations to the other truths that also have to be acknowledged.”

It is thus hinted that a task for pragmatism is to give coordination to, to find harmony of relationship for, all accepted truths. When truths of experience seem to be in conflict, this must mean either that the inclusive facts have not received full interpretation, or that somewhere there has been a misconstruction of the facts themselves. The lessons from all experience must be found finally to stand in relations of mutual harmony. It is vital to this philosophy that the full and exact meaning of the facts of experience as bearing upon life should be understood. Also that the lessons of all facts as interpreted should not be found finally discordant with the larger consensus of life's experiences. Thus it appears that the pragmatic philosophy has much to do to guard securely the territory within its own assigned borders.

The central teaching of pragmatism is that all of life's values for truth and for guidance are furnished us in the lessons of experience. The value of any assumed fact, whether in the realm of theology or of philosophy, is to be assayed only by its practical effects on life. If a fact or an idea in practical application is found to be beneficial to life, then by so far

it is true; if otherwise, it is false. "The true is the name of whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief, and good too for definite, assignable reasons." Such is pragmatism.

If pragmatism were offered to us as a universal and adequate philosophy of life, we might perhaps wisely hesitate to accept it as such. No less acute philosopher than Rudolf Eucken characterizes pragmatism as an incomplete and misleading philosophy, a philosophy that furnishes really an unworthy basis for the spiritual life of man. He thinks that pragmatism reverses the essential idea of truth itself. The deepest conception of truth is to be found in the idea that "in truth man attains to something superior to all his own opinions and inclinations, something that possesses a validity completely independent of any human consent; the hope of an essentially new life is thus held out to man, a vision of a wider and richer being, an inner communion with reality, a liberation from all that is merely human. On the other hand, when the good of the individual and of humanity becomes the highest aim and the guiding principle, truth sinks to the level of a merely utilitarian opinion." From the pragmatic basis, Eucken sees room for irreducible anarchy in the field of

truth itself. His construction is that pragmatism confines its ends to human life, at best to civilization on the broad scale. He doubts whether pragmatism thus yields a philosophy of the highest values. He asks: "Is this life, when taken as in itself the final thing, really worth all the trouble and excitement, all the work and effort, all the suffering and sacrifice, that it costs? When we examine this life, with its vanity and show and its inner emptiness, when we consider how it is penetrated through and through by impurity and pretense, does it not seem a fearful contribution? Shall the quest after truth be made a means for the preservation of this exceedingly dubious life? We cannot conceive of any belief more hazardous than a faith in life so baseless as this."

Eucken, nevertheless, sees much to approve in the pragmatic philosophy. He even suggests the desirability that German thinkers should give more attention to this system of thought. There can be no question that pragmatism is receiving large, perhaps widening, attention and indorsement among highly competent thinkers. Dr. Borden P. Bowne, of whom Eucken has written, "Dr. Bowne was a philosopher of America, and as such all America may be proud of him and his memory," was himself

much of a pragmatist. He was quite in the habit of subjecting speculative and difficult questions to the processes of life itself. Experience is the great solver of life's difficult problems. "How does it work in life?" is a question which Bowne freely used as a test of religious values. Bowne believed fully, however, in the overruling of a Beneficent Spirit in the world, and that the working of this Spirit is historically demonstrated in the actual and wide trends of human betterment. The great historic beliefs born of Christianity are found "contributing toward a higher civilization, a nobler moral order, a clearer conception of duty and the greatest good to the race." These beliefs are pragmatically self-proving. Bowne's pragmatism, however, was no simply utilitarian dream. It was founded on the broadest theistic basis, a basis which reverently accepted both the wisdom and beneficence of God's rule in the world, and is, therefore, not subject to the whims of individual interpretation.

In any event, it may be accepted, pragmatism presents certain valuable criteria to the tests of which we may confidently submit the human values of the Christian faith. The remaining sections of this discussion will be devoted to inquiries, from a few chosen and signal fields,

as to the verdict of the pragmatic view concerning these values.

1. Let us first venture into the field of general history. It has been often asserted, and by most competent historical authorities, that the moral world of the Roman age, at the time when Christianity first asserted its strength, was blasé. Religiously, with of course noted exceptions, it was a world cynical, faithless, hopeless, Godless. The nominal gods were numerous. But, if worshiped at all, they were invested with an atmosphere of gross superstition. There were no great moral compulsions in the polytheistic thought of the age. The strongest philosophers were skeptics. The exceedingly rich, of whom there were many, not only lived under the surfeit and pall of luxury, but they bore themselves with an air of supercilious scorn and contempt toward the unprivileged life around them. They, for the most part, had no upward spiritual vision, and life itself was made heavy under the cloy and congestion of exhausted pleasures.

On that hard Pagan world disgust  
And secret loathing fell;  
Deep weariness and sated lust  
Made human life a hell.

Human society was a medley. In it there existed all extremes of social condition. Mul-

titudes were poor, and their life was hopeless and unaspiring. The majority were slaves, and they were regarded as mere cattle, human beings without personality, without rights, with no hope, and no future except to grind and to be ground in the relentless mills of desperate fate. It was a world that coarsely amused itself by the exhibitions of human beings thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheaters, and by duels of gladiators engaged in mortal combat. It was a sensual world. Some luminous exceptions must be remembered, but for the most part it was a world in which atrocious immorality both abounded and was shameless. Divorce, the conspicuous index of a frivolous, lax, and immoral society, was prevalent. Woman was held in low esteem. Infanticide was notoriously common. Eucken himself characterizes this as a world of "decadent and perishing humanity," peopled with a race "grown dull and weary."

It was into such a world as this that Christianity, with its renewing ideals and life-giving power, made its advent. Nothing can be more impressive than the contrast between Rome and early Christianity. Rome was imperial, all-powerful, world-ruling, seemingly irresistible, treasuring in herself the wealth of all historic traditions, philosophies, arts, laws,



learning. Christianity took its origin under conditions commonly regarded as contemptible. It grew under the open sky of poverty. It must come to stalwart youth, if at all, only in a withering atmosphere of social ostracism and scorn. When it came to the consciousness of its mission it found itself confronted by officially sanctioned conspiracies of appalling opposition. Its pathway of progress lay through the territory of martyrdom, a territory in which on every hand it had to face the fiery ordeals of the sword and of the stake.

But Christianity, thus born, and thus outlawed and criminalized, proved herself morally invincible. She brought a new spiritual sway and a new social life to the empire. In the face of all heathen philosophies and usages, she presented a gospel of high and pure ideals, of uncompromising moral demands. She preached a gospel of helpfulness and sympathy, a gospel of divine healing from sin and its guilt, a gospel of human brotherhood, a gospel inspirational with the promise of a holy and heavenly immortality possible to all men, to the slave as well as to the king, to the poor as to the rich, to the ignorant as well as to the seer. Christianity did not hesitate not only openly to rebuke, but to put itself in positive reversal to, the rooted evils of the

age. She denounced the wickedness of divorce; presented a standard of divine worth and dignity for womanhood; denounced infanticide as murder; proscribed the brutal games of the amphitheater; taught that the very slave must be treated as a human brother, the legitimate holder of a birthright in God's spiritual family, the rightful heir to all the benefits of a divine redemption.

Nothing in contrast with the traditional and dominant habits of the age could be more radical, more revolutionary, than this program of Christianity as thrust into the life of the Roman empire. This program must be humanly anticipated as hopeless, a program indeed impossible unless perchance God should be found reenforcing it with the agencies of his own infinite Spirit. History records the result. Christianity created a new moral empire in the old paganism. She brought a purifying, transforming, and uplifting faith and hope to the old and dying world. A new moral life, instinct with divinest inspirations for humanity, put its captivating lure upon untold multitudes of the poor and the hopeless, and they set their faces toward a new spiritual heritage. The features of this history are too numerous and too various to permit detailed mention. But the history itself stands as the

record of what, on the whole, must be regarded as the most marvelous period of moral transformation and of social uplift which has taken place in the human ages. This movement grew entirely out of the experiences of the Christian life. From Christian inspirations were begotten the totality of consecration, the quenchless zeal, the dauntless heroism, the altruistic service, the unswerving faith and hope, which resulted in the spiritual conquest of that pagan world. The movement as a whole may have been characterized by a somewhat mixed history. Doubtless mistakes, and occasionally alien motives, may here and there have marred its perfection; but it is absolutely certain that all pure Christian action, the kind of action which dominated the history, was itself an unmeasured contribution to human betterment. If a movement is to be judged by its fruits, then a pragmatic philosophy can ask for no better proof of the truth of Christianity than is furnished in this history of moral conquest.

2. The Church, beyond all question, is the loftiest and greatest human organism which Christianity has created. But from the very fact that it is composed of human elements it is exposed to the misdirections of human ignorance, human selfishness, and ambitious human rival-

ries. A mistake quite common in historic statement is to make the Church a synonym for Christianity. The two terms are not synonymous. The Church, which ought to represent the true household of faith, has too often in its counsels, its enactments, and in the very spirit of its conduct shown itself untrue and a betrayer of its Divine Master. Historically, the Church has been much influenced, much affected in tone and color, by the thought and customs of the civilizations through which it has made its way. As I write, my study windows look out upon the beautiful Susquehannah, a river justly famed for its picturesque character. But this river drains wide mountain sheds. In seasons of heavy rains the soils of these mountains are washed down, and they impart to the waters of the river, ordinarily clear, their own colors. So the Church in many periods of its history has been so interfused by the spirit of worldliness, so toned and tempered by the thought and customs of its environment, as to leave it only with an impaired and enfeebled quality as the true representative of Christianity.

It has seemed both a historic and a vital necessity that Christianity all along the ages should in periods reassert its own pure and divine life. No oppositions from without, no

perversions from within, have been able to prevent the dynamic uprising, the irresistible assertion, from time to time, of its own native and life-renewing power. Such periods are familiarly known as revivals, or reformations. As in nature, however murky the skies, or however dark and menacing the clouds, even though the change be marked by lightnings and thunders, the storms are driven away, and the sun breaks forth in unclouded splendor; so, every now and then, however vicious the perversion, or however accumulated and dense the obscurities, Christianity has asserted the power to clear its own spiritual skies.

Such a period was that of the Wesleyan Revival in England. Dr. Cadman has characterized this revival as "an almost unparalleled transformation of the English national character effected under the impulse of a revival of Christianity." It is a common agreement of all historians who have treated the subject that prior to this movement the spiritual life of the Church in England was in most lamentable decline. English deism was doubtless a fruitful source of reenforcement to French atheism. The Encyclopedists of France, armed with every weapon of "eloquence, poetry, humor, and satire," deliberately sought utterly to banish all traces of Christian thought from the national

literature. Their influence swept over the nation "like a sirocco, withering not only the sentiments of religion, but the instincts of humanity, and subverting at last, in common ruin, the altar, the throne, and the moral protections of domestic life." This atheistic fury of French thought reacted upon England until its destructive force had wellnigh submerged the popular religious sentiment of the nation. English clergymen, both Anglican and Nonconformist, had become practically skeptical and spiritually inert. They gave chief attention to the shibboleths of systems, to ecclesiastical subsidiaries, while the crying crimes and the perishing moral life of surrounding communities received from them no arresting voice. The regenerating power of Christianity, as though it were a dead body from which the living soul had escaped, seemed lost to the Church.

From many contemporary testimonies I quote briefly as follows: Of this period Wesley asks: "What is the present characteristic of the English nation? It is ungodliness. Ungodliness is our universal, our constant, our peculiar character." "Watts declares that there was a general decay of vital religion in the hearts and lives of men; that this declension of piety and virtue was common among Dissenters and

Churchmen; that it was a general matter of mournful observation among all who lay the cause of God to heart; and he called upon every one to use all possible efforts for *the recovery of dying religion in the world.*" Archbishop Secker says: "In this we cannot be mistaken, that an open and professed disregard has become, through a variety of unhappy causes, the distinguishing character of the present age. . . . Such are dissoluteness and contempt of principle in the higher part of the world, and the profligacy, intemperance, and fearlessness of committing crimes, in the lower, as must, if this torrent of impiety stop not, become absolutely fatal. . . . Christianity is ridiculed and railed at with very little reserve, and the teachers of it without any at all." The great Bishop Butler said: "It has come to be taken for granted that Christianity is no longer a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And, accordingly, it is treated as if in the present age, this were an agreed point among all persons of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a subject for mirth and ridicule."

Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, in his recent book, *The Three Religious Leaders of Oxford*, quotes from a publication calling for a "National Reform of Manners," as follows: "All men agree

that atheism and profaneness never got such a high ascendant as at this day. A thick gloominess hath overspread our horizon and our light looks like the evening of the world—vice and wickedness abound in every place; drunkenness and lewdness escape unpunished; our ears in most companies are filled with imprecations of damnation; and the corners of our streets everywhere the horrible sounds of oaths, curses, and blasphemous execrations.”<sup>1</sup>

It was in such an age as this, and in such an England, that three Oxford-educated young men emerged from their cloistered life to inaugurate one of the great spiritual campaigns of history. John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield: these men, diversely gifted, were swayed by a common and irresistible impulse. They had come, nearly simultaneously, into a clear and intense experience of the spiritual life. From this experience was dated for each of them his prophetic mission. The love of God transmuting itself into a Christlike passion for the salvation of men burned as a consuming fire in their very bones. In a tireless and resistless zeal, they summoned England to repentance, preaching the gospel of a divine

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<sup>1</sup> For a vivid picture of the social and moral conditions of England in this general period, I refer the reader to Dr. Cadman's book, pp. 240-258.



redemption from sin, urging upon all men of all ranks obedience to the conditions of the transformed spiritual life and the blessedness of heavenly fellowship. These men lived the lives of saints, pure in spirit and conduct, unselfish in motive, unceasing in toil, pouring themselves out in prodigal ministries for the poor, the sinful, and the ignorant; approving themselves as very apostles of a divine salvation to a lost world.

And what were the fruits of it all? Upon the humble and toiling masses of England, in factories and mines, many of whom were not only ignorant, but profane, intemperate, dissolute, there set in a great tide of new and beneficent life. Under its transforming touch a multitude of the profane became devout of speech, the intemperate became sober, the immoral pure and clean of life. Hundreds of families that were godless, in grateful remembrance of what had been done for their homes, reared altars of worship. Uncounted numbers took on new and pure ideals for life and conduct. Religious societies were multiplied. Habits of church-going and of public worship became a new order in many communities. The Bible, which had been a neglected and forgotten book, began to be searched by the masses, as containing for them the very words of life eternal. Cleanli-

ness and comfort, suitable raiment and right-mindedness, superseded the squalor and nakedness of poverty and the vacant-mindedness and moral paralysis which are the sure products of dissolute living. Such are some of the direct fruits of the Wesleyan Revival upon the plains of England's humbler life.

In the region of faith and morals this revival introduced a new atmosphere into the national thought. The English Church itself, slow to respond, and slower still to render due acknowledgments to the sources, was morally forced to set its face toward new spiritual standards, and to enter upon renewed spiritual ministries. The moral indifference, the spiritual skepticism, the purblind worldliness, in all the high places of England were shaken to the very foundations. The testimony of more than one historian is on record to the conviction that this revival saved England from an experience on her own soil of a destructive social and political cyclone like that of the French Revolution.

But the moral fountains that found release in the Wesleyan Revival have proved the unfailing sources of spiritual streams which continue richly to flow outward into all the world. Wherever Wesleyanism has gone there has sprung up an unbroken series of beneficent institutions. It has reenforced itself on every

hand by the agencies of popular education and enlightenment. It has pioneered great missionary movements, the outcome of which to-day is an ever-widening Christian empire with its seats securely established in the capitals of the world's paganism. Methodism is to-day world-wide. It numbers many millions in its constituencies. Wherever this force has gone it has held high the sanctions of social righteousness, justice, domestic purity, holiness of personal life. Wherever it has gone it has shown itself implacable to the iniquities that blight human welfare, against political corruption, against business dishonesty, against traffic in strong drink, against the gambling den and the brothel. It has relentlessly denounced evil amusements, amusements of a kind to corrupt the youthful imagination and to deaden the moral sense. The Wesleyan movement, in its distinctive character, has won for itself wide territories which it has peopled with the habitations of righteousness and of gladness. It has been the fruitful creator of song which has voiced itself in notes of spiritual triumph and joy. Its life to-day is more than ever prophetic.

It carries in its present movements the prophecy of large place among the forces which shall witness the final triumph in all the earth of the beneficent kingdom of Jesus Christ. This

cause, let it not be forgotten, had its initial inspirations—and the sources of its sustained and ever-growing power have remained the same—in personal religious experience. Mr. Lecky, referring to Wesley's experience of a "strange heart-warming" in the Aldersgate meeting, says: "It is, however, scarcely an exaggeration to say that the scene which took place in that humble meeting in Aldersgate Street forms an epoch in English history. The conviction which then flashed upon one of the most powerful and most active intellects in England is the true source of English"—he might have said of world—"Methodism." This movement has wrought, and is still immeasurably working, untold fruits of human weal. There seems nothing for a pragmatic philosophy to say of it, save that it furnishes the most incontestable proof of the divine character of Christianity.

**IX**  
**THE PRAGMATIC TEST**  
**(CONTINUED)**

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?—*Matthew* 16. 26.

From the Protestant point of view religious individualism is legitimate, and inseparable from every higher form of religion, in so far as it asserts the right and the duty of the individual to enter into direct communion with God, to think freely about religious matters, to join or not to join such and such a religious society, and in so far as it asserts the decisive influence of the great religious individualities on the historic march of religions. Religious individualism, however, runs the risk of weakening religion, when it does not recognize its social past, its origin in beliefs common to all the members of a society and the inevitable connections between the religious society and the political society—connections which are beneficial when they are based on respect for the real nature of the two institutions.—*Professor Christian Eugene Ehrhardt.*

More and more it becomes apparent that for knowledge and help and hope concerning the deepest things of God and life and destiny we must depend on Jesus Christ or abandon ourselves to apathy or despair. . . . A vast body of forces and impulses tend to drag men downward. Men are of the earth by one side of their nature; and the earth draws and claims its own. Hence the sense-life proves so attractive. And many are found who persistently claim that sense-life is all. On this plane selfishness and animalism soon develop; and the strong begin to think meanly of the weak and to oppress the weak; and caste is born; and oppression and tyranny go hand in hand with animalism for the destruction of humanity. This tendency has been manifold in manifestation, but it is ever the same in spirit, and it is far enough from being finally cast out. And the most powerful agent against it is the life and words of Jesus Christ. He has borne the most effective testimony to the supreme worth of the individual man, and delivered the most effective rebuke to all attempts to degrade him.

—*Professor Borden Parker Bowne.*

## CHAPTER IX

### THE PRAGMATIC TEST

(CONTINUED)

3. WE may profitably inquire as to the practical values of the Christian ideal for individual welfare. There has been age-long controversy between the constituted authorities of systems and individual rights. In primitive systems the individual was absorbed in the clan. In ancient family and tribal governments the father or the recognized chief exercised despotic authority over individuals and the community. Individualism, in the last analysis, means self-sovereignty, physical, intellectual, and spiritual self-direction. Christianity is eminently an individualistic religion. Christ laid great stress upon individual worth. It can be said that the chief purpose of his Church is to secure, to conserve, and to nurture individual salvation.

Christ's uniform treatment of the individual harmonizes with this fundamental view. He was always reverent in his treatment of human nature. He saw in every man, under whatsoever guise, divine potentialities. There were

none so poor, so sinful, so abject, and so apparently hopeless, as to be beyond the range of his sympathetic and reverent treatment. Christ, in all his relations to humanity, gave not the slightest countenance to the artificial and supercilious distinctions of social caste. In his scales the soul of a slave would outweigh the values of the physical constellations.

The Church, unfortunately, has not always conserved Christ's measurements of the worth and rights of the individual. The Church of Rome, arrogating to itself the absolutism of the empire, has assumed to assert its own authority as against all values and rights of the individual conscience and of private thinking. It assumes to hold in custody the very keys to the kingdom of heaven, the gates of which at its own sovereign will it can open or shut against the individual. Throughout much of its history this Church has assumed to dictate the very articles of intellectual belief and of religious faith, to which the individual must subscribe on pain, if he should refuse, of excommunication from the kingdom of grace and glory. Some of the most appalling chapters in history are those which record the subsidizing by this Church of the secular arm for the infliction of torture and destruction upon those whom it has denounced as heretics.



The Reformation, even under Luther's leadership, effected only a partial release from the abuses which Rome had assumed sovereignly and habitually to inflict against the rights of the individual conscience. But one of the facts on which Luther insisted as fundamental was that moral obligation finally rests with the individual. In his view the only activities of moral value were those volitionally performed. Kant, probably more than any other single philosopher, has influenced modern thought. With him, the view is central that morality is personal, and that its chief function relates to the freedom and dignity of the individual.

Organization and individualism would seem to be the opposite poles of society. Both should exist without antagonism, each serving the proper functions of the other. The question is as to the sane coordination of these two factors. Individualism, carried to the extreme, means social and civil anarchy. Organization, government, unlimited by restrictions which conserve individual rights, means despotism. Broadly, the motive of despotism has inflexibly held to the subordination of the individual by the Church or the state. The strife between authority and the individual has been a standing conflict in history. The "Divine Right of Kings" and the "Infallible Church" stand for

forces which in large part have always withstood the highest rights of the individual.

There must be a rational meeting-ground between organized authority and the legitimate rights of the individual. Organized government there must be. Within rational limits, it is an imperative duty of the individual to loyally support government. The government polices and guards his rights. He enjoys the protection and security of its power. The community is safe and sane under its common rule. Government affords scope for the play of the patriotic instinct. No sane individual will deny obligation to, or withhold loyalty from, an equitable government. The real pith of the question inheres in what is the true function of government in relation to the individual. The true function of government is to guarantee the orderly ongoing of society. It institutes and authoritatively inflicts penalties against marauders and the lawless disturbers of public and domestic peace. It institutes a great machinery of public service, which it supports by a system of taxation upon the citizens. It creates public buildings for governmental uses, builds public highways, conducts postal systems, supports systems of public education, and institutes many eleemosynary agencies which are supported from the public funds.

The ultimate function of government is that of highest service to the common good. In the last resort, this involves the best possible service and protection in the interests of individual rights and liberties. While authoritatively forbidding interference by the individual with the rights and duties of others, it guarantees to him protection and scope in the largest legitimate exercise of his own individuality. The individual measures at once both the highest and lowest points of value in the community life. The real value of the community itself is best measured by the quality of the individual units bred in its atmospheres.

War has been a ruthless destroyer of individual rights. Its hordes of captives, including men, women, and children, have too generally been subjected to gross indignities and cruelties. Slavery is as old as history, but to the slave, even under vogue of the most humane conditions, there were never accorded the proper rights of the individual. While slavery in its older forms has been pretty generally banished from civilization, it still remains true that there inhere in the industrial organisms many conditions decidedly unfavorable to the best development of the individual. The corporations are organized for profit-making.

Upon this end their entire machinery is relentlessly focused. Thousands of their workers are engaged in routine and most uninspirational pursuits. There is little or nothing in their vocations to kindle ideals or to stimulate to high achievement. These workers must accept such wages as the corporation can be induced to pay. The corporation management itself is essentially selfish. This is the underlying secret of the widespread alienation rife in the industrial world as between capital and labor. It cannot be denied that the dominant conditions of the industrial world, as now organized, are not favorable to the highest development of the individual laborer. In so far as this is true, it is obvious that large areas of business, under existing conditions, are as yet far from being conducted on a Christian basis. That there is so much in modern business methods that tends both to depress and to neutralize the individual toiler is not to the credit of the present civilization. I am quite aware that hard, grasping, and surfeited capital will be disposed promptly to construe and to dismiss all this as the language of an impracticable dreamer. But God in his heaven is as much interested in the poorest laborer in the factory as in any autocrat of high finance. And God's method with the world will finally

win such universal approval as to put to shame the motives of conscienceless money. This is God's world, and all the men and women in it are God's children. God made nature bountiful. On the basis of the equitable distribution of nature's products, there should be no starving children, no shelterless families, none who are the abject slaves of overfed and heartless capital. There is a widening prophetic light moving upon the age in which can be clearly seen the coming of a better day for industrial humanity. In God's calendar this day bears definite date, and its dawning is as sure as the coming of to-morrow. In God's larger diagram of civilization humanity is treated as a democracy in which every man inherits the birthright of citizenship. Any agency, be it church, government, plutocracy, industrial despotism, which stands in the way of the highest development of the individual, stands by so much as opposed to the reign of Christ in the earth.<sup>1</sup>

Let us now more specifically ask: What are

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<sup>1</sup> This field of fact and thought is too wide for present discussion, and can here only be referred to. A general fact, however, should be guarded. Whatever improvements may come in the equitable adjustments of society, the time will never come when demerit will not reap its own reward; when thriftlessness, intemperance, immorality, and crime will not receive the just doom of outlawry. As long as crime in any form exists in the earth the mills of God's justice will never cease to grind.

the practical relations of Christianity to the individual? This is not to ask concerning things which can be measured in material values. It is not to ask concerning gold and silver, bank stocks, or wealth in merchandise or lands. It is to inquire concerning God's spiritual program for, his practical spiritual dealings with, humanity. Man is potentially God's child. He is made in God's intellectual image, therefore, capable of thinking God's thoughts. He is endowed with the faculties of a moral and worshipful nature, therefore capable of moral and spiritual fellowship with God. He is immortal, therefore potentially capable of infinite progress in knowledge, of an ever-deepening spiritual communion with, and likeness to, God. Nothing less than this is included in the Christian concept of man. But, if this standard is accepted, it utterly displaces all lesser measurements of human worth. In this high light it is clear that any agency or system, which of choice or deliberately works detriment to the individual or to the community of individuals for the sake of promoting the selfish ends of another individual, or a community of individuals, thereby works a hurtful encroachment against the moral order.

If Christ's program for man is large, he also

makes high and exacting demands upon his subjects. The Christian is to live in the purpose of perpetual separation from wrongdoing, from purposed sin. He is to cherish inward purity, cleanness of motive at the source of action, at the very seat of desire. Love toward God and toward man must be regnant in his life. He is to be unselfish in relation to his fellows, doing good to all men as he has opportunity. He is to be forgiving in spirit, not returning evil for evil, or injury for injury. He is a sworn soldier of the cross; a joint partner with Christ in a mission of good for all the human world.

If this scheme should seem to ordinary vision overtopping and impracticable, it is not to be forgotten that no man is asked to realize it in his own unaided strength. As a living and ever-present example there stands One before him whose life was historically a faultless exemplification of the perfect Christian ideal. Corresponding to this outward visible Perfection, there is assured to the Christian an inward spiritual transformation of life, wrought by nothing less than the direct incoming of God into the life of the individual soul. This divine in-coming brings to the soul reenforcement against the assaults of evil temptation, begetting within all holy and benevolent de-

sires, filial confidence toward God, a stalwart hope of final triumph over sin and death, and of blessed heirship in immortality. We shall reach a true measurement of Christ's estimate of human worth only as we have insight into his regenerative mission for the individual. Christ literally begets in his disciples a new and divine spiritual life. The natural man must be "born again," born from on high, newly begotten by the Spirit of God. This conception is either absurd or it is divine. But it works pragmatically and infallibly in human experience.

The Socialistic philosophy lays great stress upon the regenerative power of environment. Christ values environment only as it ministers to character. If men are evil in themselves, no environment can save them. A rich environment only gives to men of vicious character and of evil appetites larger opportunity to indulge their evil propensities. Swine are swine even though housed in a mahogany sty and fed from a silver trough. Christ proposes to uplift the human world only on one divine basis. He plans to install the kingdom of God on earth through the consecrated living of spiritually regenerated men.

Christ's method works in history. If any man is skeptical of this, his skepticism only



witnesses to the obscureness of his own vision. Nothing is historically clearer than that multitudes of the finest moral heroes of the race have lived and have grown spiritually great and strong under Christian inspirations. On the broadest scale the Christian philosophy, a philosophy which presses upon every soul the vision and sanction of eternal things, has been found equal to the development and maintenance of highest moral heroism both for the individual and for civilization at large. The men most consciously in partnership with God have always been the peerless prophets of the world's moral progress.

And now, let us ask, What does Christianity do for the disfranchised man? We have heard much of the slave, of the forlorn poor, of the man from whom opportunity has been forced by a doom to the drudgery of dwarfing toil. It must be confessed that society in its natural processes does very little to brighten and to inspire the lives of these men. Their enforced lot and environment do not in themselves minister to high and cheering hopes. But Christianity does come to all these classes to make them sharers in the divinest destinies. It recognizes no social castes. Its ministries of grace are characterized by no favoritism as between king and subject, as between master

and slave. Before the cross of Christ all alike stand on a plane of common peership, all alike are the heirs of equal privilege, in the spiritual citizenship of the Kingdom.

It is not easy for us to translate into modern thinking what must have been the sense of anomaly and wonder created by Saint Paul's impassioned plea to Philemon in behalf of Onesimus, a runaway slave. Philemon was a high-minded man, and doubtless a warm personal friend of Saint Paul. Onesimus, as a runaway slave, by all the code, merited the most drastic punishment. But in Rome, the great refuge for the social outlaw, he had come in contact with Saint Paul, and had experienced Christian conversion. Under the promptings of a new conscience he felt that he must return to his master. And this is the occasion of Paul's letter to Philemon. How does he write concerning this slave? He calls him his own son, one whom he had spiritually begotten while he himself was in the bonds of his Roman imprisonment. He pleads with Philemon to forgive Onesimus, and to receive him not as a slave but even as a brother beloved both in the flesh and in the Lord. Nothing could be more in contrast with both the pagan spirit and custom of the age than the spirit of this letter.

It is well known to every student of Christian history that one of the standing miracles of early Christianity was the spiritual conversion and transformation of the slave. Many of these whose bodies were in physical bondage were born into lives of spiritual freedom and sonship in Christ Jesus. Many of those whose physical lot was that of slaves have left undying names in the hero lists of the early Church. Among those counted as the world's poor the inspirations of Christian experience have made the lives of multitudes pure, lovely, gentle, heroic. Christ never denounced wealth in itself considered. Some of his cherished friends were prosperous in temporal things. But when he would picture the most vivid lesson on the issues of human destiny, he instituted a comparison between a rich man and a destitute beggar lying at the rich man's gate. The beggar died, and was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and lifted up his eyes in torments. The decisive thing in this lesson is not that the one was rich and the other poor, but that the poor man in temper and faith was responsive to the divine will, while Dives, sumptuously fed and royally arrayed, was gross in soul, alien to the divine approach.

The great revivals of Christianity have been

responded to by multitudes of the poor. Among these there have been wrought marvelous transformations of character. Their social conditions and relationships have been wondrously improved, and under the creative influence of the new life many of the children of the poor have gone forth to achieve for themselves careers of strength and of influence. To every man, however depressed by the doom of uninspirational toil, Christianity comes with a message of divine cheer. It witnesses to him that he is God's child. It brings to him the moral and inspirational support of unseen spiritual forces. It fills his life with a sense of fortitude and peace inspired from unearthly sources. It assures him that there awaits him a glorified immortality in which he may forever enrich himself from the infinite ministries of God's grace, glory, and power. The man so inspired becomes a moral hero. He says: "Whatever my present afflictions, they will be brief at the longest, and there awaits me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. So I will not look at the things which are temporal, but at the things unseen, which are eternal." The man whose soul has been warmed by a sense of spiritual fellowship with Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour, and into whose convictions there has been

inspired a confident belief in Christian immortality—this man has at command, whatever his material environment, whether he be rich or poor in this world's goods, the basis of highest moral heroism.

Nothing more clearly disproves the Socialistic claim that material abundance is essential to good character than the multitudes of sweet Christian homes among the world's humble people. Every pastor of large experience knows that among the poor are unnumbered homes idyllic in domestic virtue, homes inspired and made beautiful by the cheer of high religious faith and hope, homes whose members hold to life's central convictions, and face life's duties and conflicts with the fidelity and heroism of the soldier.

When Saint James would rebuke those who toadied to the rich, but who despised the poor, he taught that they should be no respecter of persons, asking, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" Christianity when truly experienced, whether among the rich or the poor of this world, always brings to its subjects social, intellectual, and moral values of the highest order. It has morally transformed and beautified more individual lives, has

brought to these lives a finer social and spiritual uplift, has imparted to them a rich peace and a firm fortitude, has inspired them with the divinest motives and hopes both for this life and the life to come; and it has done all this in a measure never approached by all the religions and philosophies outside of itself in the world's history.

Christianity, both by what it has accomplished, by what it shows itself capable of doing, and by what it pledges itself to do, to meet the moral needs of all individuals and on all planes of human need, presents a history which calls for unanimous commendation by the pragmatic jury.

**X**  
**THE PRAGMATIC TEST**  
**(CONCLUDED)**

Plenteous grace with thee is found,  
Grace to cover all my sin;  
Let the healing streams abound;  
Make and keep me pure within.  
Thou of life the fountain art,  
Freely let me take of thee:  
Spring thou up within my heart,  
Rise to all eternity.

—*Charles Wesley.*

Christianity alone has shown that, on the one hand, it meets the needs of the soul of man as no other religion does, and that, on the other hand, it can adapt itself in so doing to varying conditions as no other can. It appears now as the only religion that can properly claim universality.  
—*Principal Alfred Ernest Garvie.*

When I go down to the grave I can say, like so many others, "I have finished my day's work," but I cannot say, "I have finished my life." My work will begin again next morning.—*Victor Hugo.*

Looked at from the outside we are animals like the other animals, having the human form, indeed, and yet subject to the same general laws as the animal world—birth and death, hunger and pain, labor and weariness. But our Christian faith holds that this is only the outward appearance, not the inward, spiritual fact. We are now the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And thus our life is transformed. We are not simply the highest in the animal world, we are also and more essentially children of the Highest, made in his image likewise, and to go on furthermore with him; made, as the old catechism had it, to glorify God and to enjoy him forever, growing evermore into his likeness and into ever-deepening sympathy and fellowship with the eternal as we go on through the unending years, until we are "filled with the fullness of God." This is the true evolution. Man is making; he is not yet made.

"All about him shadow still, but, while the races flower  
and Fade,  
Prophet eyes may catch a glory slowly gaining on the  
Shade."

—*Professor Borden Parker Bowne.*



## CHAPTER X

### THE PRAGMATIC TEST

(CONCLUDED)

4. LET our final inquiry be as to the sufficiency of Christianity to meet the needs of man's spiritual nature. If at the highest point of man's universal and spiritual needs Christianity should prove impotent, then there might well be hesitancy in recommending it to the individual or to the community. Failure, indeed, at any point of spiritual need would disprove its claim as a supreme religion. Such failure has never been shown. Christianity only and rightfully insists for the demonstration of its values upon such conditions as every science exacts for itself. The scientific demonstration is reached only by perfect conformity to its conditioning requirements. Christianity works precisely in the same way. Christ said: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God."

In the widest practical test, Christianity has abundantly proven itself equal to meeting

all the moral needs of the individual and of the race. It is scientific in its application. It responds with absolute demonstration in all cases where its own conditions are faithfully met. It thus conforms to the highest demands of reason. Reason accepts, and confidently bases its conclusions upon, demonstrated facts. Christianity openly and universally offers itself to the test of experience. On this plane it is thoroughly scientific in method.

Christianity works in perfect harmony with the mental and moral constitution of man. It neither seeks the elimination nor suppression of any normal human faculty. It takes man's mental and moral constitution just as it is, illuminating the reason, purifying the motives, energizing the moral faculties, and quickening purpose for the quest of a new life. Thus, while furnishing in itself the superlative moral and spiritual ideals, it also appropriates and utilizes religious truth from whatever sources. While it makes immeasurable moral advance over any other religious system, it is never found in antagonism to the highest moral sense of the race. It makes perfect appeal to the universal religious nature of mankind. Its conditions have been tested by representatives of all races, and among no people have they been found to fail in fulfillment

of promise. As no philosophy, no science, no other religious faith in the world's history, Christianity has experimentally demonstrated its power to satisfy the deepest spiritual needs of universal man. And if on this level it succeeds, it must be accepted as satisfying the most crucial test by which its values can be challenged.

There never was a time perhaps when in candid philosophical thought the paramount claims of man's spiritual nature were so clearly recognized as now. As wonderful and as fruitful as may be his intellectual genius, this is far from the greatest thing about man. His spiritual nature furnishes the far higher mark of his kinship with the Divine. The human intellect may make itself athletic in grappling with the problems of nature, but there is a hunger in the human spirit which can be satisfied with nothing less than the life of God in the soul. It is coming more and more clearly to be discerned that man as an individual, and man socially, never comes to his best, to his noblest self, save when his life is directed by regenerative motives from within. This alone is salvation, this alone is the secret of most worthwhile character.

There is a legitimacy in material satisfactions. It is a good thing to be well fed and well clothed.

It is pleasant to be housed in capacious, well-appointed, and artistic homes. It is a good thing to be in command of sufficient means and material appliances to meet the physical conveniences of life. Christianity does not extol poverty as having intrinsic virtue in itself. It does bring unearthly cheer and inspirations to multitudes whose lot is that of poverty. Neither, on the other hand, does it deny attainment of exalted virtues to those who are rich in this world's goods. The supreme difficulty in the situation is that the nearby appeal to human nature stands at the door of the senses. The demand for physical satisfaction is imperious. It asserts itself from our earliest history. The multitudes, it may be said human nature in general, are under constant and powerful temptation to seek life's chief satisfactions from material sources. This temptation has asserted itself well-nigh unchecked in many periods of history. Many have installed materialism as a chief good. Luxury has held riot in high places.

The present, of all periods in history, comes nearest to being an era of universal knowledge. Science, art, an omnipresent press, all are lending themselves to a world-democracy of intelligence. Nature, in unprecedented measure, is yielding her native treasures to the

increase of human wealth. Vast capitalistic combinations are developing industrial productivity beyond all the dreams of our fathers. While intelligence and real culture were never so widespread, it is also true that wealth and its consequent luxury were never so prevalent in the world as to-day. The world itself was never so attractive as now. Materialism, with whatever refinements it may keep company, puts a mighty lure upon the age. The multitudes, seeing the fatness and the sleekness, the revel of appliance and plenty, enjoyed by the rich, are under exceptional temptation to believe that the world of sense and of pleasure is, after all, the world chiefly to be sought. The canker of this temptation has eaten deeply into the life of the wayfaring masses. It is doubtless true that the laborer never received such compensation for his toil as now. He himself lives a life of greater plenty, a life nearer to the borders of luxury, than any of his predecessors. But the wide exploitation of wealth which he sees around him has made him the most discontented laborer of the ages. He has caught the material infection. He has accepted the belief that if he himself could only be the possessor of wealth, life too with him would be supremely well.

The wide absorption of the age in pursuit

of material satisfactions makes it an age difficult of spiritual appeal. The phenomenal development of human power over natural forces, the harnessing of these forces for man's service, and the consequent successful achievement of huge material enterprises—all this has immensely contributed to divert man's attention from himself to the world of external nature. Nature, through science and invention, has so lavishly laid down her wealth at the feet of man as to confuse his vision. The material and outward, with their blinding glamour, have bulked so large as for the time being, at least, to suspend his synthesis of values. The age has vaulted into the saddle and rider and hounds together have plunged into the wilderness in pursuit of the game—Material Success.

This insanity of materialism is perhaps a part of the inevitable price which this age must pay before it can enter upon a new spiritual era. No age ever had on so wide a scale, and with such prodigal stocks, so great opportunity for testing the utmost values which a pure materialism can contribute to human life. Modern material wealth has mustered a more brilliant revel, and has spread before its guests a far more sumptuous banquet, than were ever possible to any preceding age. But

the after satiety and disgust of the revel are proving the same as from all like experiments. In all history the guests have risen from the sating feasts of materialism only to realize that they have been feasted at a Circe's banquet. Materialism, with its attendant luxuries, has always brought about the intellectual and moral decadence of the people, has been a foremost promoter of the disintegration of civilization itself. The trend of present-day materialism proves no exception to the historic rule.

Man's material life was never so immense, its achievements never so marvelous, its wealth never so bewildering, as now. But, in it all, there is no lesson clearer than its utter impotence to bring supreme satisfactions to human life. The vast materialistic resources of the age have utterly failed alike to morally buttress civilization, to install honesty in the business world, to furnish worthy ideals to society, or to satisfy the conscious and deeper needs of the human soul. The charges of graft and of bribery in political life, of injustice and dishonesty in business relations, the menace of immorality and divorce in circles of wealth and of privilege, were never more rife than now. The human soul awakes to learn anew the lesson that all this bulk and show of material-

istic resource is powerless to feed its deeper hunger, or to minister to its larger life. The soul's true citizenship can be realized only in the realm of the spiritual. It is made for a career larger than can be confined within material stagings. It inflicts upon itself disinheritance and banishment when it elects to remain aloof from divine fellowships.

This sketch attempts no complete picture. It only aims, however imperfectly, to give a true indication of the nature and effects of a pure materialism in its relations to life and character. It would betray a grossly imperfect as well as unjust measurement of the age to deny the large wealth of sane moral judgment and of noble spiritual character which inhere in its life. Probably in its aggregate life no age in history has ever been so rich in redemptive moral agencies as the present. A highly significant indication is in the fact that, even within a generation, a materialistic philosophy which had been largely domesticated in popular thought, has given place in circles of correct thinking to a philosophy of the spirit. Error is a stubborn thing. One of the sad facts of history is that when it has once become rooted it takes a long time to eliminate the poison of a vicious philosophy from the popular mind. A false materialism may



still find clamorous utterance among the street and mob orators, but it is safe to say that it no longer has any footing in competent philosophic thought.

It is significant that both Eucken and Bergson, two men who easily rank among the foremost of living philosophers, each in his own way, hold as basic and central a spiritual view of the universe. These men have not traveled to their conclusions by the same path. Nor are their views identical. Indeed, as is true of all, even the greatest, thinkers, these two men, wondrous and wide as is their vision, are but provincial explorers in the fields of infinite reality. But the fact of real significance is that their philosophies alike take initiative from spiritual, and not from materialistic, bases.

Eucken, in incisive and eloquent terms, portrays the moral failure of the modern materialistic civilization, with all its seemingly limitless resourcefulness, to meet the needs of man's higher nature. He declares that "Modern life, in particular, with its liberation of every force, has brought to the surface so much that is impure, unedifying, and unworthy, and has placed so clearly before our eyes the pettiness and unreality of a merely human culture, that it becomes continually more and more hope-

less to obtain a satisfying type of life upon this basis and to provide human existence with a meaning and a value. It is being increasingly felt that there is something in man which this immanent type of life does not bring out, and that this undeveloped element is something indispensable, perhaps the best of all!"

Eucken cogently insists that the only ultimate normal life of man, that life for which the best that is now within him constitutes both a prophecy and a demand, that life which alone furnishes the real key and meaning of man's being, can be realized only by "a transforming spiritual culture." Eucken, it is to be remembered, is not in the usual sense an orthodox Christian. But, negatively, with all his knowledge of historic thought, he is able to present no source whence the spiritual regeneration of the world shall come save Christianity. Toward Christianity itself this great mind utters no pedantic or flippant views. He looks upon Christ as an historic Character who has changed the face of the world. In his book *Can We Still Be Christians?* is this passage: "Our answer is not only that we can be, but that we must. But we can only be Christians if Christianity is recognized as a world-historical movement still in flux, if it is shaken out of its ecclesiastical

vitrification and placed upon a broader basis. In this lies the task of our time and the hope of the future."

This passage contains the very philosophy of Eucken concerning the spiritual adequacy of Christianity for meeting the moral needs of mankind. On the one hand, he accepts Christianity as the supreme realization of the spiritual ideal; but, on the other hand, he seems to fear that the very life and mission of Christianity itself are imperiled under their present forms of expression. I cannot but think that it marks a well-nigh fatal limitation even upon Eucken's grasp of the situation that he confounds, or at least seems to confound, the ecclesiastical forms of Christianity with the genius and spirit of Christianity itself. Between the two concepts there may be, and doubtless is, a world-wide difference. Ecclesiastical interpretations, in large numbers, may be thoroughly superseded and become as worthless as an outworn garment.

The spirit of Christianity is cosmic, ever-creative, always preceding, and always remedial to, the developing moral needs of the race. It is itself the efficient and inspiring soul of the world's moral and spiritual progress. The vital processes of Christianity do not need revision; they do not need defense. They work

like a leaven in the growths of civilization, constantly securing for themselves a broadening application to man's industrial, educational, social, and moral life. Man's intelligence needs to be continuously quickened and enlarged, that he may have even a proximate appreciation of the vitalizing and increasing functions of Christianity in human affairs. If this view—perhaps he would not give it place—were added to Eucken's conception, then he would stand as a foremost witness to the complete adequacy of Christianity for meeting the moral needs of the world.

I have sought in this discussion, though very fragmentarily, to secure a fair and representative impression of the attitude of present-day philosophy toward the main question of our pursuit. The approved philosophy of the age plants itself on spiritual and not on materialistic bases. This philosophy clearly recognizes the supreme dignity, value and needs of man's spiritual nature. It recognizes, as in the case of Eucken, that Christianity, more perfectly than any other known system, furnishes the environment, the stimuli, the moral supports, both for the deepest needs and the highest developments of the spiritual life. Outside of revelation itself we could hardly ask for more satisfactory testimony as to Christian values.

Let us come back, then, to listen finally to the voice of Christian experience. In overwhelming consensus this voice testifies that for the penitent sinner is divine forgiveness; in place of the sense of guilt there may be the joy of pardon; for the will weakened and impaired by sinful habit, moral renovation and spiritual reenforcement; the installment within of new affections, desires, and purposes; a new and wondrous consciousness of reconciliation and fellowship with God; a newly awakened love for, and moral interest in, the welfare of one's fellows. A man when thus made a new creature in Christ Jesus is moved by a Christ-like desire for a like experience for all his fellows. He says in his new-found joy:

“O, that all the world might taste and see  
The riches of His grace;  
The arms of love that compass me  
Would all mankind embrace.”

We have seen in this discussion, and from many standpoints, how the incoming of the Christian life inspires in the human breast the spirit of good will and of benevolent purpose toward all men. The evidence is universal and overwhelming that the spirit of Christianity, tested by its own intrinsic quality, is a power which works always and only in the highest interests of human welfare. Judged by

its fruits, Christianity, in its very nature, must be counted worthy of the highest pragmatic sanction.

5. As a final thought, though one which cannot be considered as merely incidental to the subject, Christianity not only outstrips but climaxes the profoundest human philosophies in its confident proclamation of immortality. The dream of immortality has throughout the ages haunted the most luminous minds of the race. But Christianity positively crowns immortality as a regal and superlative fact in the universe of moral being. The fruits of immortality as an attained estate cannot, of course, be pragmatically tested. But immortality as a faith, in its inspiring and regulative power over human character and conduct, makes legitimate appeal to the pragmatic judgment.

It must be sadly admitted that in many thoughtful circles the belief in immortality is not as vivid now, not as confident, as in some previous times. This situation is accounted for largely by new and absorbing preoccupations which have taken possession of modern-world thought. A new world of material wealth has been thrust upon the human vision. Science has challenged modern thought with a thousand baffling questions, many of them

carrying implications of negation against the continuous survival of the soul. As Professor Fosdick has said:

Another reason for the decline of emphasis upon the importance of the life to come is not so creditable. . . . In the present age this life has been made vivid and interesting in an unexampled way. Old isolations have been overcome, so that the whole world is now the province of any mind that chooses to be cosmopolitan, and rapidity of communication has made possible world-wide enterprises on such a scale as no previous age has ever known. New knowledge has consumed the thoughts of men, and new avenues of wealth have engaged their ambitions, until the contemplation of eternal destiny has paled before the immediate brilliance of this present world. For men are like auditoriums; they can hold so many occupants and no more; and when the seats are filled and even the "Standing Room Only" sign has been removed, the next comer, though he be a prince, must cool his heels upon the curb. The minds of men have been preempted by the immediate and fascinating interests of this vigorous, exciting age. The fact is not so much that they through reasoned disbelief have discarded faith in immortality, as that through preoccupation they have lost interest in anything beyond the grave.

Preoccupation does not annul facts. A man in a mood of preoccupation may step off the edge of a precipice, but the result is none the less fatal. Pleasure-seekers who ride on the swift river may be all unmindful of the ocean. But the current not less surely bears them on

toward the heaving tides and the roaring breakers of the not-distant sea. Immortality may remain true though all men should forget the fact. Grant all the mysteries that shadow to the natural reason the question of immortality, weigh all arguments which materialism can urge against the fact, still the moral reason forever asserts that if we live in an honest universe, man must be immortal.

It is not a little significant that many of the greatest authorities in modern science not only find no insuperable obstacles to faith in immortality, but they marshal the very facts of science itself in support of such faith. "The fact that men like Sir Oliver Lodge in natural science, Professor William James in psychology, Dr. William Osler in medicine, have thought it reasonable to cherish hopes of immortality, suggests at once that while immortality may not be proved, it certainly has not been disproved." Professor John Fiske boldly says, "The materialistic assumption that the life of the soul ends with the life of the body is perhaps the most colossal instance of baseless assumption that is known to the history of philosophy." Further, in giving attention to the argument against immortality as based upon the assumption of the mind's dependence upon the body, he says: "How



much does this argument amount to as against the belief that the soul survives the body? The answer is, Nothing! absolutely nothing! It not only fails to disprove the validity of the belief, but it does not raise even the slightest *prima facie* presumption against it."

An effective answer to skepticism of immortality, be it scientific or otherwise, would be to grant its premise, and then to pursue its logic to the end. This logic would turn the universe into a graveyard. It would veil all the skies of human hope in darkness and sterility. If science teaches anything, it is that nature through incalculable æons, and at infinite costs, has wrought as with unswerving purpose toward the great objective known as a human personality. This is nature's goal, beyond which it seems powerless to advance. What is the logic of the theory that death ends all? It means that Isaiah and Socrates, Jesus and Paul, Dante, Shakespeare, and Luther, that all the brilliant constellations of human genius lifting themselves above the horizons of history, that all these were born after the birth-pangs of countless ages only, like fireflies, to shine for a brief moment, and then to be extinguished forever in rayless night. This logic turns the universe into a moral chaos, and makes of human life itself an inexplicable and mocking

enigma. The very thought is intolerable to all noble minds.

Professor Huxley, when consciously approaching old age, wrote to John Morley:

The great thing one has to wish for as time goes on is vigor as long as one lives, and death as soon as vigor dies. It is a curious thing that I find my dislike to the thought of extinction increasing as I get older and nearer to the goal. It flashes over me at all sorts of times with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more of what is going on than I did in 1800. I had sooner be in hell a good deal—at any rate, in one of the upper circles, where the climate and the company are not too trying. I wonder if you are plagued in this way.

Nor is there any final satisfaction in the Positivistic teaching that men live in the deeds of good which they bequeath to posterity; that thus they are immortal in the sense that their own good deeds live on in the enrichment of subsequent lives. In the end it is all the same. We come finally, at least so far as man is concerned, to universal extinction, to a worn-out and lifeless universe.

The rational indications of the undying life of the human soul are many. It may be soberly and measuredly said that not all the skeptical philosophy of the ages has been able to neutralize the force of these indications. As against all arguments, it may be said that

the rational constitution of the soul carries in itself the instinctive and inseparable belief in its own immortality. Christianity comes to reenforce and to illuminate these native promptings by conceptions of infinite value. The Christian conception is far other than simply meaning a continued existence. It calls for an infinite program for the soul's moral development, for its achievements and attainments. It means space and opportunity in which the human individuality, that last consummate product of nature's dateless efforts, is to find forever ceaseless development of its godlike potentialities. This program inspired into human convictions transforms life into a school of moral heroism. It evens up the moral opportunities of being. It goes far with the poor and the unprivileged toward compensating for what often seems the unjust, and even the cruel, inequalities of this earthly life.

Many a man here does not seem to have a fair chance. Here is one in a factory exhausting his physical energy for every working day in the year in a most monotonous and undeveloping employment. There is the poor seamstress supporting herself, and, it may be, her fatherless children, by giving herself morning, noon, and night to the needle until the doleful "Song of the Shirt" works itself into

her very nerve and fiber. But this man carries in his mental constitution all undeveloped and ungratified the faculties of the philosopher. The poor seamstress has lying within her the latent faculties of poet and prophetess. Physical limitations are for the present putting impassable barriers up around these souls. Their opportunity is yet to come. Immortality will furnish the limitless landscape and the theater in which they shall yet develop their powers to the full.

Immortality, after the Christian type, alone furnishes real scope for the complete fulfillment of that which is now prophetic in all men. The strongest man at present is relatively infantile. The man of largest vision is, at best, nearsighted. Most men are at present hedged in by barriers of inheritance, of narrow education, of untrained faculties, of skeptical habit, all of which bar them from widest outlook upon the universe of their real possibilities. We are provincial in our habits. Our beliefs are narrow. We are like dwellers in caves by the seashore rather than explorers of the boundless deep. The wings of our souls are not yet trained for familiar flights through the starry spaces. The sons of God, tabernacling here in the flesh, have not yet found their spiritual vision. The best are as they

who look through a glass darkly. God's more glorious universe, the spiritual, has as yet been revealed only in prophecy, in types, in occasional experiences and revelations which have come to elect souls in mountain-top experiences. It will not always be so. For those who toil a day of emancipation will come. The drudgery of life will be lifted away, and the soul, with fully awakened powers, will come to the larger universe of realization.

None can as yet measure or describe the meaning or the opportunities of the heritage of immortality for the sons of God. We are living in a physical universe practically infinite in its dimensions and resources. In the sphere of intellectual possibilities the immortality of the soul is paralleled only by the immensity of worlds—worlds all of which are under the common sway of God's scepter, and the study of which it might require an eternity to exhaust. The great counterpart of this truth is that man has hardly as yet begun to discover the real wealth of his own faculties, of his own possibilities. He shall yet develop the art of discovering every hidden fact of the universe. He shall develop power both to capture and master all truth which may minister to his own enrichment. But lying alongside these great truths is that other inevitable

fact that every child of God must finally have full opportunity for self-development.

But, however immeasurable the intellectual possibilities of the immortal life, we may not forget that the material universe, immense and marvelous as it is, is but secondary in its values. The real glory of God's greatness is moral. The crowning destiny which he purposes for man is moral. The highest pursuits and enjoyments of the sons of God will forever be in the realm of the spiritual. And if God has overwhelmed our minds by the discoveries he has made of himself in the physical universe, what infinitely more glorious moral and spiritual revelations may not his sons expect? While eternity moves on, God will forever press new revelations of his own exhaustless glories upon the unfolding vision and receptivity of his children.

In the light of most saintly and heroic living, it has been abundantly proven that the Christian conception of immortality furnishes the loftiest and most inspiring motives for the shaping of character and the government of life.

Death is the chilliness that precedes the dawn;  
We shudder for a moment, then awake  
In the broad sunshine of another life.

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## INDEX



# INDEX

- Agnosticism, large contingency of mind characterized by, 11
- Ames, Edward P., cited, 46
- Anæsthesia, state of, 44
- Animosities, tribal, long survival of, 76
- Arnold, Matthew, a believer in moral law, 32
- Art, service of, to world-democracy of intelligence, 236
- Augustine, referred to, 61; character and conversion of, 94-96; life lived by, 97
- Aurelius, Marcus, quoted, 150; classed with Moses, 151; quoted, 152
- Ballard, Dr. Frank, statements from pen of, 16
- Balling, Peter, quoted, 42
- Bashford, Bishop James W., cited, 151; referred to, 181
- Begbie, Harold, referred to, 128
- Believer, the graces in life of, 148
- Bible, the supreme utterance of the highest religion, 38; criticism of, 73
- "Birth-song of Evangelical Revival," by Charles Wesley, 159
- Bisseker, Professor H., quoted, 99
- Bowne, Borden P., cited, 46; quoted, 91; referred to, 197; pragmatism of, 198; quoted, 214, 232
- Boxer Rebellion, fortitude of Chinese Christians in, 155
- Brainerd, David, work of, 181
- Brierley, J., quoted, 42, 64, 74, 106
- Browning, Robert, quoted, 58, 59, 60; cited, 128
- Bunyan, John, voice of in-suppressible, 156
- Business, the inner motive of, 78
- Butler, William, referred to, 181
- Cadman, Dr. S. Parkes, quoted, 205, 207
- Calvin, John, referred to, 130

- Cartwright, Peter, referred to, 35, 36
- Cary, William, work of, 180
- Celsus, complaint of, against Christians, 122; view of, concerning Christian converts, 123; his explanation of firmness of early martyrs, 162
- Chalmers, of New Guinea, referred to, 181
- Character, Christian, 107; study of claims for, 110; New Testament standards of, 115; testimony of, 141
- Character, factors entering into, 108; the outcome of cumulative forces, 109; biblical ideals of godly, 112
- Children, valuable recruits of the Church, 136
- Christ, pragmatic rule of, 13; mission of, 61; greatness of, 62; a great disturber of the traditions of his times, 72; growth of followers of, 120; teaching of, 165; Kingdom of, seemingly of slow development, 169; the incomprehensible and immeasurable character of history, 172; activity of, 174; scope of mission of, 183; quoted, 233; a Character who has changed the face of the world, 242
- Christian, the, Christ's disciple, 65; duties of, 223
- Christians, austere purity of morals of, 121; early history of marvelous, 122; Chinese in Boxer Rebellion, 155
- Christian Church, situation within, 25
- Christian experience, ideal, how regarded, 23; primitive, nature of, 30; evidential values of, 103; assessing the values of, 138; phenomena of, 142; Cause and Source of considered, 143; characterized by fortitude, 154; voice of, 245; Christian ideal for individual welfare, inquiry concerning, 215; Christian standard, ideal, discussed, 78, 79
- Christian service, 167
- Christian truth, sum of, 24; narrow horizon assigned to, 28
- Christianity, how rated by Nietzsche, 10; hate toward, 11; systematic opposition to, 12, 13; not fearful of comparison with

other forces, 13; opposition to encountered by Saint Paul, 15; characterized by both faults and failures, 15; without a rival in good accomplished, 15; ready to be judged by its fruits, 16; diverse views in, 25; religious expression outside of, 27; a religion of the spirit, 65; its mission to save the individual soul, 67; the Church's conception of function of on earth enlarged, 75; vision of today, 76; spirit of too narrowly measured, 80; spread of over Roman empire, 98; reforms of, 116; cherished traditions rebuked by, 118; Jewish opposition to, 119; early life of tested by official fury, 120; power of to transform, 123; state of Roman world at time of advent of, 200; though outlawed, morally invincible, 201; wickedness denounced by, 202; divine life of reasserted, 204; divine character of power by pragmatic philosophy, 212; great revivals of responded to by the

poor, 228; moral needs of all individuals met by, 230; sufficiency of to meet needs of man's spiritual nature, 233; not antagonistic to moral sense of race, 234; spirit of, 243; a power which works always in the highest interests of human welfare, 245; a final thought concerning, 246

Christianity and the New Age, quotation from, 183  
 Church, the, organized labor living in practical divorce from, 11, 12; general trend of thought in, 12; treated with neglect, 13; importance of membership in, 34; in possession of revelation of Christ's character, 39; human leadership required by, 40; things emphasized by, 129; great scandal suffered by, 170; adverse criticism of noted, 173; characterized by a spirit of charity, 175; the greatest human organism created by Christianity, 203; not a synonym for Christianity, 204  
 Church of England, spir-

- itual life in, at time of Wesleyan Revival, 205
- Church of Rome, arrogant claims of, 216
- Civilization, fruits yielded to, 15; God's larger diagram of, 221
- Clarke, Dr. William Newton, mental law stated by, 9; quoted, 42, 86
- Corporations, object of organization, 219
- Coe, George A., cited, 46
- Cook, Joseph, quoted, 84
- "Conversion," the term discussed, 85, 86; narratives of Old Testament relating to, 87; New Testament treatment of, 87; processes of, 88; reality of attested by millions of witnesses, 90; a moral miracle in history, 98; evidential values of, 99; remarkable instance of, 126
- Creed, formulated, not disparaged, 29; exalted above character, 31
- Creeds, many men excluded by, 28; worthy of historic honor, 30; necessities of ages which gave them birth, 30; not necessarily immortal, 31
- Criticism, true function of, 71; acceptance of new views demanded by, 72
- Cross, preaching of considered foolishness, 118
- Culture, widespread, 237
- Dante, cited, 249
- Davison, Dr. W. T., quoted, 64; cited, 100
- Denominations, Protestant, dogmatic and narrow qualities of, 77; divisive sectarianism in, becoming a thing of increasing abhorrence, 77
- Denominationalism, one weakness of, 31
- Despotism, motive of, 217
- Doddridge, Philip, conversion hymn by, 161
- Duke of Bavaria, exhortation to John Huss, 154
- Ehrhardt, Professor Christian Eugene, quoted, 214
- Elijah, cited, 55
- Emerson, quoted, 32, 137
- Epictetus, referred to, 150; classed with Moses, 151
- Era, present, one of universal knowledge, 236
- Erasmus, quoted, 74
- "Eternal life," emphasized as a thing of quality, 163
- Evangelical thought, duty of, 38
- Evolution, perfected theory of, 57
- Eucken, Rudolf, on reason,



- 48; indebtedness of age to, 79; referred to, 80; cited, 96; position of relative to pragmatism, 196; quoted, 197, 200; moral failure portrayed by, 241; quoted, 242; philosophy of, 243; referred to, 244
- Europe, present state of, 14
- Eusebius, quoted, 146
- Fairbairn, Andrew Martin, quoted, 22; quoted, 108
- Faith, nonevangelical, 28; indispensable handmaids of, 30
- Findlay, Dr. G. G., quoted, 146
- Fiske, Professor John, quoted, 168, 248
- Fortitude, Christian, 158
- Fosdick, Professor, quoted, 247
- Fox, George, quoted, 51
- Francis of Assisi, transformation of, 180
- Garvie, Principal Alfred Ernest, quoted, 232
- Gibbon, not favorable to Christianity, 124
- Glover, Dr. T. R., quoted, 125
- God, relations of, with the human soul, 9; revealed to men to-day, 39; the only answer to the infinite in man, 49; has furnished object lessons of himself, 50; deals spiritually with all men, 51; dealings of, in history, 52; perfected world of, how characterized, 53; redemptive purpose of, 56; not balked in his purpose, 56; exaltation of man central to his purpose, 62; the great Thinker, 68; voice of, demands ethical living, 78
- Gospel, the, announced by the angels, 147
- Government, benefits of, 218; ultimate function of, 219
- Hadley, S. H., conversion of, described, 126-128
- Hall, Professor Thomas C., quoted, 11
- Harnack, quoted, 96
- Hebrews, the ancient, spiritual genius of, 52; compared with Grecian contemporaries, 53; statesmanship of, a negligible quantity, 54; place in civilization must not be minimized, 54; stands in moral center of drama of the world, 55
- "Historical orthodoxy," essentially Christian, 24

- Holy Scriptures, the, contents of, 38
- Holy Spirit, the, 63; accepted as God working in his world, 65; his mission the same as that of Jesus Christ, 66; offices of, 66; vital relation to man's being, 67; mental insight quickened by, 74; deals with interests of human life on unlimited scale, 81; companionship of, 111; transforming and character-forming mission of considered, 134-143; distinctive fruits of, 149, 162
- Hocking, William E., cited, 46
- Horne, Charles Silvester, quoted, 186
- Hugo, Victor, quoted, 232
- Human body, designated as "temple of the Holy Ghost," 71
- Human soul, relations of, with God, 9
- Humanity a solidarity, 77
- Huss, John, referred to, 130; fortitude of, 154; quoted, 155
- Huxley, Professor, quoted, 250
- Hyde, Dr. William De Witt, reference to book by, 184
- Immortality, 252
- Individualism, the opposite of organization, 217
- Intellect, vital questions decided in court of, 68; does not yield all the criteria of truth, 69
- Intellectual culture, wrongly suspected of being a foe to spirituality, 73
- Isaiah, cited, 55, 151, 249
- James, William, indebtedness to, acknowledged, 17; quoted, 44; cited, 46; quoted, 84, 89; cited, 125; quoted, 137, 152; referred to, 193; cited, 248
- Jeremiah, referred to, 151
- Jesus Christ, the supreme fact of, 51; quoted, 90; his conception of the godly character, 113; quoted, 192
- John, Griffith, referred to, 181
- John the Baptist, cited, 55
- Jones, Professor Maurice, quoted, 106
- Joy, a fruit of the Spirit, 147; spoken of by Christ, 159
- Kant, referred to, 49, 107; influenced by Stoical

- ideals, 109; influence of, on modern thought, 217
- Kingdom, Christ's, nature of, 37
- Kingsley, Charles, cited, 44
- Knowledge, slow march of, 57
- Knox, John, referred to, 130
- Labor, organized, practically divorced from the Church, 10, 11; acceptance of materialistic guidance by, discussed, 14
- Latimer, Hugh, quoted, 155
- Laws, spiritual, ignorance of, 140
- Lecky, W. E. H., quoted, 124, 176, 192, 212
- Lewis, Wilson S., referred to, 181
- Life, Christian, ethical quality of, 140
- Lincoln, Abraham, character of, 33; intellectual difficulties encountered by, 34
- Livingstone, David, referred to, 181
- Lodge, Sir Oliver, cited, 43, 248
- Lowell, J. R., quoted, 42; cited, 43
- Loyola, Ignatius, conversion of, 180
- Lucian, attitude of, toward Christians, 123
- Luther, Martin, doctrine taught by, 61; referred to, 94; lifted to a new level by a spiritual revelation, 131; cited, 249
- Mammon-god, widely worshiped in the age, 12
- Man, God's supreme counterpart in universe, 26; religious nature of, 27; faculties exercised by, 47; moral constitution of, not a lie, 49; made for two relationships, 67; relations both individual and social, 67; endowment of intellectual faculty of, 68; pre-eminently a social being, 75; to be a Christian the loftiest realization possible to, 79; Christ's program for, 222; material life of, never so immense, 239
- Mankind, poor response of, to God's higher thought and purpose, 56
- Martyn, Henry, labors of, 181
- Martyr, Justin, quoted, 122
- Martyrs, Christian, courage of, 164
- Material satisfaction, legitimacy of, 235

- Materialism, harangues on, 11; present place of, scientific, 12; rests on the life of the age, 12; lure of, upon the age, 237; effects of, in its relation to life and character, 240
- Mathews, Shailer, quoted, 186
- McArthur, Sir Alexander, quoted, 182
- McConnell, Bishop Francis J., quoted, 84
- Messengers, unsalaried, nescience and godlessness taught by, 11
- Methodism, world-wide today, 211
- Militarism, Prussian, referred to, 14
- Miner, Miss Luella, quoted, 155
- Millard, Benjamin A., quoted, 22
- Mind, the, made for critical investigation, 69; the Christian, a pathfinder, 74
- Missions, Christian, motor-nerve of, 179
- Moral law, not a cheat, 49
- Moral wholeness, discussed, 32
- Morbidity, mental, cause of, 72
- Morrison, Robert, work and patience of, 181
- Moses, cited, 55
- Motive, the real Christian, 178
- Nature, laws of, absolutely reliable, 48
- Nature, treasures yielded by, 236
- Nelson, John, quoted, 156
- Nietzsche, philosophy of, 10; death of in a mad-house, 14
- Non-Christian world, the, citizenship of divided into two general classes, 13
- Oldham, Bishop W. F., quoted, 182
- Onesimus, plea of Paul in behalf of, 226
- Origen, referred to, 61; testimony of, 123; declaration by, 134
- Orthodoxy, intellectual, arraignment of, 31
- Osler, Dr. William, cited, 248
- Pagan nations, general reference to, 171
- Palmer, Ray, experience of in death, 162
- Parker, Edwin Wallace, referred to, 181
- Paton, in the South Sea Islands, referred to, 181
- Paul, Saint, cited, 55;

- quoted, 62; referred to, 97; declaration of, 111; discrimination made by, 114; a man of fortitude, 147; persecuted, 148; courage of under privation and suffering, 164; the first Christian missionary to the Gentile world, 180; cited, 249
- Peirce, Charles, referred to, 193
- Pentecostal revival, the, 148
- Pessimism, a corrective of, 171
- Phenomena, religious, frankest exploration in realms of, 24; recognition of, 46
- Philosophy, Nietzsche's, defined, 10; materialistic, relegated to the past, 12; Nietzschean, genius of, 13; discussed, 88; compelled to take note of religious history, 97; socialistic philosophy, 224; present-day, 244
- Positivistic teaching, 250
- Pragmatic test, the, 191; discussion of continued, 215; discussion of continued, 12, 33
- Pragmatism, as a distinct system, 193; discussed, 194-198
- Press, alien, work of, 11; omnipresent, world-democracy of intelligence advanced by, 236
- Processes, divine, erroneous conclusions concerning, 29
- "Psychic sense," considered, 43; not identified with "spiritual sense," 45
- Psychologists, protests entered by, 46
- Psychology, only one department of philosophy, 88; knowledge of needed by teachers and preachers, 89
- Race, the, constitution of as a whole, 52; infantile moral helplessness of, 56; evolutionary processes of, 57; discussed, 58
- Rankin, Henry B., quoted, 34
- Rationalism, 193
- Rauschenbusch, Professor Walter, quoted, 168
- Reformation, period of, considered, 130
- Reformation, the, handicapped by dogmas, 131; only partial release from abuses of Rome effected by, 217

- Relations of God with the human soul, 9
- Religion, an inseparable feature of, 24.
- Religion, Christian, discussed, 110, 111
- Religion, Hebrew, discussed, 112, 113
- "Religious Experience," a subject of ages-long discussion, 9, 10; the term, why chosen, 23.
- Religious faiths, heterogeneous, attitude of, 25
- Religious life, psychic phenomena of, 87
- Religious question, the, vastness of, 23
- Religious views destined to fail, 24
- Revelation, final ideal of, 189
- Rich, the exceptional temptations of, 237
- Richard, Timothy, referred to, 181
- Ridley, Nicholas, martyrdom of, 155
- Roman age, at time of introduction of Christianity, 199
- Rome, cosmopolitan in its philosophy and religion, 117; former power of, 200
- Saul of Tarsus, conversion of, 91; courage of, 93; death of, 93; first impulse of after conversion, 175
- Science, position of, relative to laws of nature, 48; what it can and cannot do, 88; contributive to a world-democracy of intelligence, 236
- Schaff, Philip, quoted, 192
- Scriptures, critical study of, considered a sin by some, 70
- Seneca, referred to, 150; suicide of, 151
- Service, the law of Christian life, 78; the modern Christian demand for, 186
- Shakespeare, cited, 249
- Silas, spirit of, under persecution, 148
- Skepticism propagated in present-day thought, 10
- Slave, the, Christianity's service to, 225
- Smith, Robert Elmer, referred to, 156
- Snaith, John, quoted, 132
- Society, a school for training for service, 75; Christ's idea of the moral renewal and reconstruction of, 76
- Socrates, cited, 249
- "Song of the Shirt," referred to, 251
- Spiritual fruits, 145

- Spiritual opportunities,  
deadly indifference toward, 12
- Spiritual sense, the, 43;  
a racial possession, 45;  
potential in universal  
human nature, 47; to be  
philosophically reckoned  
with, 48; the organ  
through which God finds  
entrance into the soul,  
50; God's approach to  
the universal heart, 51;  
common to the race, 56;
- Soldier, the, fortitude of,  
157
- Spiritual things, worldly  
indifference toward, 11
- Starbuck, Edwin D., cited,  
46
- Stead, William, cited, 43
- Stoic, the, referred to, 152
- Stoicism, ancient, disciplined  
character developed in,  
109; school of, 149; illustrious  
representatives of, 150; provision  
of for suicide, 151; insufficiency  
of the most perfect fortitude of,  
152
- Strong, Dr. Josiah, quoted,  
168
- "Superman," mission of,  
10
- Symonds, J. A., cited, 44
- Taylor, Father, quoted, 33
- Tennyson, Alfred, cited,  
44; quoted, 169
- Tertullian, quoted, 120;  
scenes witnessed by, 157
- Thoburn, Bishop James M.,  
referred to, 181
- Trance, defined, 43;  
vision of Saint Peter in,  
44
- Universe, moral, forces of,  
26
- War, a destroyer of individual  
rights, 219
- Wealth, as such not denounced  
by Christ, 227
- Webster, Noah, "character"  
defined by, 107
- Wesley, Charles, hymn of  
on conversion, 159;  
hymn written by, 160;  
quoted, 232
- Wesley, John, qualities of,  
132; evangelical career  
and death of, 133; experience  
of, 159; quoted, 206
- Wesleyan Revival in England,  
205; period of, 206;  
fruits of, 209
- Whitefield, George, referred  
to, 208
- Whittier, John G., quoted,  
106
- Wilson, Canon James Maurice,  
quoted, 61

- Woolman, John, experience  
of, 156
- Wordsworth, William,  
quoted, 146
- World, the, scientific unity  
of, 51
- Wycliffe, referred to, 130
- Xavier, Francisco, referred  
to, 180
- Zeno, founder of school of  
Stoicism, 149
- Zeus, referred to, 151
- Zwingli, referred to, 130









